

PHILIP MELANCHTHON

1497 - 1560.

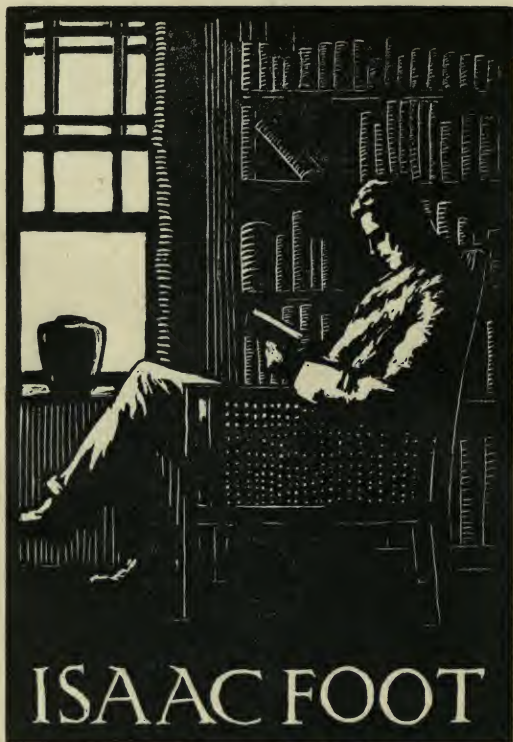
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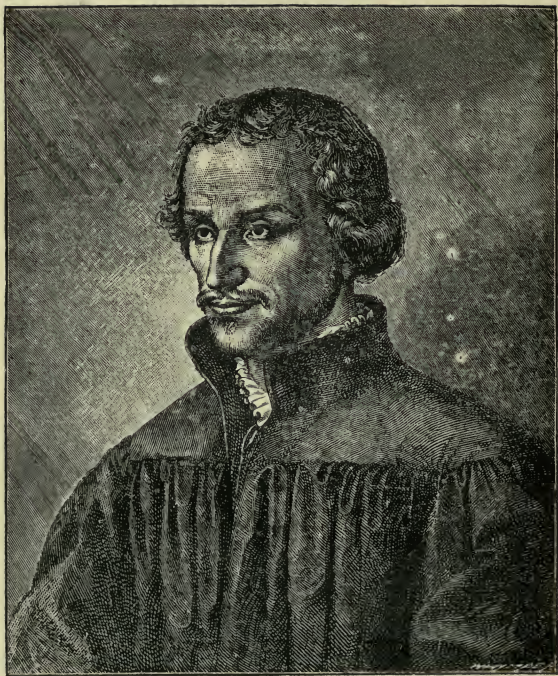
1894

I have many of
Melancthon books as
well as two of
his letters

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PHILIP MELANCHTHON.

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1497—1560.

BY THE LATE

REV. GEORGE WILSON, F.L.S.,

Literary Superintendent, British and Foreign Bible Society.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

MAIN



THIS book, small though it be, is the work of one of the ablest and most thorough modern students of Melanchthon's life and works. Unhappily, the final touches and the careful revision which the Author was so competent to give are lacking. When the manuscript was under consideration, the accomplished Author died suddenly as he was engaged in his duties at the Bible House. This sudden departure, while apparently in good health and in the full discharge of his ordinary duties, came as a great shock to the many friends who knew and who loved Mr. Wilson. To these it may prove a mournful satisfaction to get this last treasure from his stores of learning. Those who through this book

make his acquaintance for the first time will join his friends in regretting that he has not lived to produce that volume on the great Reformation Scholar which he had hoped would have been the crowning work of his life.

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PHILIP MELANCHTHON.



CHAPTER I.

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD.

WHEN, some pensive hour in later life, the thoughts of Philip Melanchthon would turn from his Wittenberg study to the days when he was a child, they led him, in imaginative memory, to a little town near the valley of the Rhine. A pleasant little town, reposing independently on its hilly slopes, and surrounded by vineyards and cultivated fields. The burghers are moving about the streets or standing at their doors in the sun ; there are children here and there ; and never long out of sight two or three comfortable ecclesiastics. The town has a serviceable wall round it, which more than once has been honourably defended. Within it and among the houses

are open spaces and gardens ; and, through the gates looking towards the country, there are glimpses of wooded hills. In all respects a place where honest labour seems ever alternating with rest ; while, in visions of memory, a warm sunshine seems to fold it in the stillness of a dream.

The child—for in imagination he is again a child—sees all this ; and specially he sees one house facing the market-place, with a workshop attached to it full of the tools and furnishings of an armourer. He sees again the helmets and breastplates, skilfully shaped and inlaid, and all the forging and fashioning implements which he so often looked and wondered at long ago. He sees a man with quiet, grave face bending over the work-bench, but as if weary, and less able to work than to direct the others. It is his father ; and the child gazes at the kind, wasted face through his tears. In the garden are two little girls at play, and a boy younger by four years than himself ; and, inside, there is the baby's round face and padded cap reposing on the pillow in the cradle. Sometimes in the garden, sometimes in the house, always busy, he sees his mother, and hears her voice as she

talks or calls to the children. How often has



MELANCHTHON'S BIRTHPLACE.

he played round that sunny garden and in

the shop with his sisters and his brother George in the old days ; and now, when it all comes back to him as if it were yesterday, in his dream vision he sees them as they play again.

The little town is Bretten, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, some twenty miles south from Heidelberg and seven eastwards from Carlsruhe. There, on February 16, 1497, Philip was born. His father was George Schwartzerd, armourer ; his mother was daughter of Hans Reuter, mayor of the town. Philip was their eldest child. By the time he had learned to pilot himself unsteadily from one chair to another, he found out he had a baby sister, Anna, who before long found him out in turn, and became his playmate and companion. Two years later appeared his brother George ; then another sister, Margaret ; last of all came little Barbara. Theirs were the child-faces which rose before him when he thought of the days that were no more.

Philip's father had come from Heidelberg. While yet a lad, the Elector had marked his ability, and sent him, the better to learn his craft, to the famous workshops of Nuremberg. He grew to be a notable fashioner of honest

armour ; better still, he was himself an honest man. Like his own weapons, stout and trustworthy, and with a character genuine as his own steel, it was no wonder the neighbouring nobles held him in honour, and, as a special mark of their regard, came to the wedding in Spires on the day he married the mayor's daughter.

From this time Bretten became his home, and the house in the market-place seemed to have held both families, as they afterwards grew pleasantly together. And, in keeping with his manly straightforwardness, George Schwartzerd was eminently devout. With few words to waste on any subject, his upright life was his best religious profession, but his son remembered how reverently he observed every religious duty, and how at midnight he used punctually to rise to pray. In a rough and jovial society he was a German Puritan, stout and valorous while tenderly good and true ; and some of the finest qualities of his famous son are developments of those of 'the Locksmith of Heidelberg.'

Frau Schwartzerd was a model housewife. However devout and benevolent, her special

characteristic was practical sense. In her own woman's kingdom she was prudence embodied and in full activity. Her husband's coat-of-arms—a gift of the young Prince Maximilian—was a lion with hammer and anvil; her own might have been a well-filled and closely-tied purse with a bundle of keys. The good house-mother was an excellent supplement to her earnest and deep-souled husband. Even to this day not a few German proverbs are traced back to her; and when some wiser head will rebuke one not quite so steady, it is not unfrequently done by quoting a thrifty and sagacious aphorism of the mother of Melanchthon.

The armourer was much from home; but Philip found an unfailing friend in the mayor, his grandfather. Like not a few grandfathers, he was delightfully indulgent. As the little boy grew up, so keen and clever, so sensitive and affectionate, it was no wonder the old man loved him with an excusable partiality. Of the four lads who soon came to trot off punctually each morning to school—Philip and his brother George and two of the mayor's younger sons—Philip was evidently the child of promise and of hope. Hans

Reuter was himself a man of higher cultivation than usual, and he could understand and direct the development of an opening mind. And if perhaps a little too indulgent to his favourite, he had himself furnished a corrective in the tutor whom, on the break up of the school through the master's illness, he had provided for the boys. John Hungar was, like the grandfather, cultured and kind, but he was a sound disciplinarian ; and Philip respected him all the more that he made him work hard.

Pleasant to memory those early days in Bretten must have been. On Sundays the mayor's family was seen filing off with an exemplary regularity to church ; and it was a source of special enjoyment to the old man to watch Philip as he sang in the choir with the missal which he himself had given him in his hand. And then there were those remarkable sermons which, with intermittent attention, the boys used to listen to, and which Philip, with the spirit of later days beginning to stir within him, used to think over with hopeful mental independence. To the stories of the saints generally he was devoutly attentive ; but he was much exer-

cised in mind when one day a preacher told the congregation that the slippers of St. Francis of Assisi were made of the wood of the tree of knowledge which once grew in the Garden of Eden. That seemed somehow to need clearing up in a talk with the grandfather or with John Hungar. And when, on another occasion, the priest displayed a gold ring on his finger, the disapproval on the part of one at least of the choristers was peculiarly strong.

But there was no more serious worshipper after all than Philip Schwartzerd. Like many another incipient ecclesiastic, he set up an imitative service at home, and his mother and the servants decorously attended on his ministrations. There was no harm in it, she thought, and it would do the boy good. One can imagine on the Sunday afternoons, and in some room of the old house when the sun was mellowing westwards toward the Rhine, a group of children gathered round Grandfather Reuter and listening with natural joy and wonder as he told them some instructive tale from the *Golden Legend*, or one of the even more astonishing histories drawn from the yet uncollected stores of that brightest

and, in intention, most improving of all story-books—the *Acta Sanctorum*.

Less enjoyable, perhaps, but not less profitable, were the week-days spent under the watchful eye of John Hungar. Latin was a principal study, and, in days when Horace and Virgil were scarce books, the classic was John Baptista of Mantua. The poems of this contemporary author were painfully digested in portions of some twenty or thirty lines each, which were carefully prepared overnight and accurately translated in the morning. And it was real work. During all his later life Philip recollected the discipline of these early days : the microscopic examination of clause and sentence, verb and substantive to which the tutor's conscientious thoroughness subjected his boys, as well as the inevitable strapping which was sure to follow every instance of carelessness. But no one thought of the master but as his pupil's genuine friend ; and it is his worthiest memorial in the world of learning that the Preceptor of Germany gratefully attributed his own sound grammatical scholarship to the faithful drilling of John Hungar.

But the clouds were already gathering over

these peaceful days. The gradual decay of age may be less evident to the observation of boys ; but they must have noticed that now for a long time the armourer had been looking ill. And in the same month, the October of 1507—month of dying glories and fading, falling leaves—both the grandfather and the armourer died. The good old man was the first to receive the message with the secret token of the King ; and the little people with perplexed grief saw the townspeople assemble to carry with all honour the mayor's body to its rest. And hardly was the funeral over when the children were taken into the room where their father lay. With a fresh shock of fear and trouble they saw the strong face and form sorely altered for the worse. The armourer felt the approach of death, and he would see his boys and girls and speak to them again before the end. By this time Philip was ten years old, and the dying man turned with serious affection to his eldest son. ' I have seen,' he said, ' many a change in my life, and there are greater changes close at hand. May God preserve you all through whatever comes ! And you, Philip, my boy, be sure to live righteously and in God's fear.

Then he looked at them each with the last wistful look, and touched them with his dying hand. Poor little Philip and Anna, and Margaret and George ! Poor little Baby Barbara ! They were drawn gently from the room ; and, to be out of the way when the inevitable change came, they were sent to Spires. 'It was the first time I left home,' says Philip, twenty years afterwards, 'and it was with tears.' Within three days the children learned that their father was dead.

When the two women who were left in the desolate house sat down together after the second funeral, they decided on what was to be done. It would be better that the mayor's widow should join a relative in her native town and bring up the boys at the Gymnasium there ; and the little girls would stay in Bretten with their mother.

Accordingly, one day in 1508, Philip and George Schwartzerd and John Reuter set off with their bundles of books and clothes to Pforzheim. The town lay less than a dozen miles south towards the opening of the Black Forest. There was an excellent High School, and the lads could not have been placed

under a better instructor or kinder friend than the head-master, Dr. George Simler. They fell to work, and the principal soon found that among the boys from Bretten was one of his most promising scholars.

Simler was himself one of the heralds of the sounder and wider learning of the Reformation. In days when some skill in mediæval Latin made a scholar, he had familiarised himself with Cicero, and, a still rarer accomplishment, he knew something of Hebrew and Greek. His aptes pupils he used to form into a class for the study of the fascinating but forbidden language of Homer and the New Testament, and Philip soon qualified himself to be enrolled among the rector's Grecians. Those were days not to be forgotten. It was at Pforzheim that the future Preceptor of Germany first heard the music of the old speech of Hellas, and listened, as one who for the first time hears the fall of sea-waves, to the 'surge and thunder of the Odyssey.' His friend Camerarius has sketched the young scholar as he was about this period, and the picture is pleasantly vivid. Scarcely any one could be more apt to learn, and while remarkably keen and clever, he was at the

same time so lovable that everybody liked the generous and gifted boy. For, though both eager and emotional, his was from the first a gentle heart, and, if just somewhat hasty-tempered, he was incapable of anything unhandsome or worthy of serious blame. He used to stammer a little—a habit which it took him a long time to get over; but his friend thought it rather set off than otherwise his boyish volubility. What wide questioning eyes the rector often found fixed on him as they studied Greek together! What a hurry of tripping and tumbling words, as the young lips tried to shape themselves to some of the sonorous hexameters of Homer!

But Philip made another friend at Pforzheim even more important to him than the rector. The mayor's widow had a brother who used to come to see her, and Philip, who must have seen him before in Bretten, remembered that the tall portly gentleman was the famous Dr. Reuchlin. Discussing among themselves all they could hear about the stranger, the boys found out that he lived on a little estate of his own near Stuttgart; that he was a marvellously learned man, and that he was very fond of rearing white peacocks.

Very soon the old and the young scholar became hearty friends. The doctor was delighted with a lad so ardent and capable as Simler told him Philip was, and as he himself soon found him to be. Reuchlin had a deep, kind, somewhat dreamy eye, a jovial laugh, and a winning manner, and, what was more important to Philip, he and the famous Erasmus were the two most learned men in all the Fatherland. It was a great satisfaction to the old scholar to know that his little kinsman was likely to be himself famous, and when he once sent him his doctor's hat, and told him he would be a doctor and a great man himself some day, it was one of those jests which are more than half in earnest.

Better than even the hat, he used to furnish Philip with books, one of them *A Golden Key to the New Learning*, a Greek grammar and lexicon bound in one. Never was kindness better bestowed.

On one of his visits to Pforzheim, the burghers, to do honour to their famous townsman, entertained Reuchlin at a banquet. At the end there was a Latin play, and the doctor found that the actors were some of the

Academy boys headed by Philip, and that the piece was one of his own. It was a pleasant surprise, and it merited some corresponding recognition. One of the customs of the lettered world of the time was to impose upon those whom merit had given a claim to its freedom new personal names, which, reproducing the substantial meaning of the old ones, set them forth in well-sounding Latin or Greek. Reuchlin himself was Capnio among the learned, and Erasmus might have half forgotten that he had ever been known as Gerhard Gerhartzoon.

And now the Dux of Rector Simler's Grecians was to undergo the initiation ceremony at his distinguished relative's hands. He was to be no longer Philip Schwartzerd, but Philip Melanchthon. The new designation was Reuchlin's, and from those days onwards it steadily grew into usage, till now with many it may stir a slight surprise that ever there was any other to be superseded by the now familiar name.

Philip was ripening fast, and it was plain that the time had come to leave Pforzheim for the University. The choice fell on Heidelberg, where Philip's paternal grand-

father and his father when a boy used to live in the old days.

One ambition of earlier days was to be fulfilled. He was to be a real student, and he was going to college.

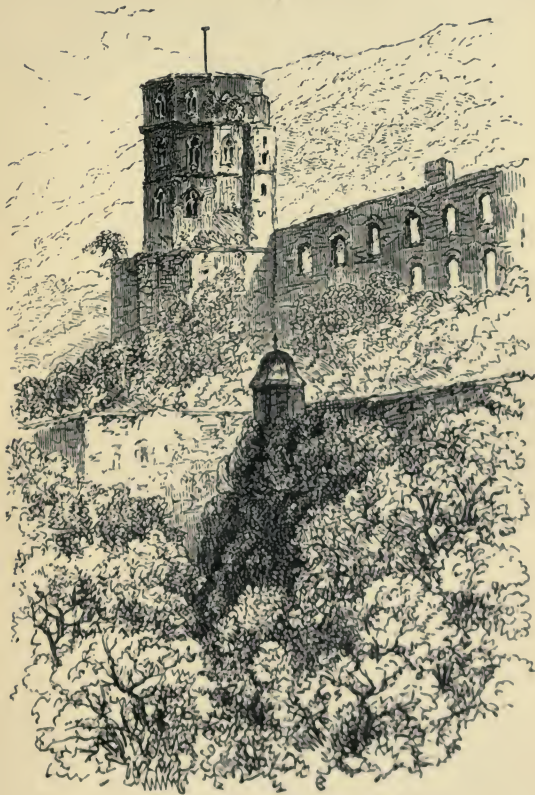
CHAPTER II.

HEIDELBERG.

LET us then with Philip leave these school-days, and, as we best can, make ourselves of his company, when, in the autumn of 1509, he said farewell to Pforzheim and turned his face to go to Heidelberg. He gave some days to Bretten, for his mother was there, and his sisters and brothers, and there were various preparations to be made. What feelings stirred in the kind maternal heart at the leave-taking, mothers will instinctively understand ; and students at their first outset to college, and touched with the romance of that time, may divine what passed in Philip's own. At length the gables of the little town dip below the hill ; the path along the Brüchsal leads him towards the open valley of the Rhine with its frequented road, and after a few stages the Königstuhl rises before him, and the huge castle, and the old city clustering its houses along the river side. And then he makes his way to the house of Dr. Pallas

Spangel, where his home is to be, and the kind old professor bids him welcome. The old professor had known and honoured the father—the armourer—and the first look, not to speak of the good words which had preceded Philip, makes him quite sure he will like the son.

The next day Philip paid his first visit to the University—two centuries old even then—and one may still read in the venerable register the entry of his matriculation: ‘In Rectoratu II., Mag. Johannis Wysers de Oberspach, Jurium Licentiati intitulatus est d. XIII., Oct. 1509.—Philippus Schwazerd de Bretten.’ But the first lesson he learned distinctly and sorrowfully, and it was learned in a very short time, was, that in the old class-rooms there was little to be learned at all. ‘Nothing was publicly taught there,’ he wrote, thirty years afterwards, ‘except a wordy dialectic and a pretence of physical science. It was like finding one’s way through labyrinths choked with rubbish; how little was known of literature and history: of the very subjects men themselves professed to teach!’ But if there was little of liberal learning, there was more than enough of scholastic metaphysics: the



HEIDELBERG CASTLE.

classes were filled with the empty reverberations of the Realistic and Nominalistic Controversy, and the students occasionally transferred the discussion to the streets, and fought it out with their clubs. This intellectual eclipse was all the more depressing; for Heidelberg, some years previously, had seemed to be moving into the dawn which was then beginning to rise over Germany. John Wessel, one of the Reformers before the Reformation, had been one of the professors; so had been Rudolph Agricola; Conrad Celtis, that once famous laureate, and one of the most enthusiastic prophets of the New Learning, had once prelected in Heidelberg; and Wimpfeling for three years had taught poetry and eloquence, and to students who presumably were not all unresponsive. But these more enlightened scholars had departed, dusk had rolled back again, and mediævalism had once more settled down comfortably in its former haunts. For Melanchthon the Heidelberg period was to all intents and purposes, so far as the University was concerned, a blank. There was but one exception, and it is a doubtful one, in the occasional lectures of the young Swiss, Conrad Helvetius, who ex-

pounded astronomy according to the system of Ptolemy. But he interested Philip: there was a mystic quality in the boy's mind, caught perhaps from the author of *De Verbo Mirifico*, to which the haunting mysteries of the old science appealed; and to the end of his life he remained under its spell.

But when the University failed him, there was compensation at home. The name of Dr. Pallas has been forgotten: it is but an obscure vanishing figure one can catch looking into that old world, hardly, indeed, an embodied figure at all, but a shadow as if moving along the wall into the void air. But he was an eminent man in his day—*vir illo tempore clarissimus*—and, what is far better, he was a good one. The ripening of peaceful age had come upon him; he was of tempered wisdom, liberal and kind. Too old to learn Greek, or take to the new methods and fashions in learning, he was far from unsympathetic towards them, and he had the quality, regrettably rare among old men, of being able to associate with the young. And what memorable evenings they used to have in the old house when Reuchlin came over from Stuttgart, and Dr. Pallas and he, while the young

students listened, talked about the men they had known, the stir and movement of the world ! They would tell stories of Rudolph Agricola, that excellent scholar, a man *honnête, franc, sans envie, modéré, de belle humeur*, and how he used to lecture when he was professor in the College ; of Celtis and his Latin plays ; of Wimpfeling, whose forgotten books on *Youth* and the *Training of Young Men* reveal his sympathies, and who united something of the devout temper he had learned from Thomas à Kempis with a reformed learning ; of many others whose names long since slipped out of the memories of men. Wimpfeling, indeed, Philip seems to have met—he visited Heidelberg in 1510—and they apparently became something like friends, for the boy's first printed verses are found in a book which Wimpfeling published soon after. But there is another name of more significance perhaps in Philip's Heidelberg history : it is that of Geiler of Kaisersberg, whom Reuchlin knew and loved, and in whose sermons we may still feel the pulse of his warm devotion, and hear the awakening message of the genuine Evangel itself. These sermons Philip read, and they were perhaps

his earliest and most influential lessons in the practical theology of the heart. Long afterwards when, in Wittenberg, he expounded the Epistles in his *Postillæ*, he quoted from Geiler's pungent pages, and paid tributes of affectionate honour to his name.

Philip had younger companions, and, as he has himself said, it is student friendships which are often the most delightful of life. There was Peter Sturm, whom we dimly remember nowadays as brother of James Sturm of Strasburg, but whose name should be kept green as Melanchthon's early friend : there was John Sorbillo, the poet of the youthful party, whose long-silent harp once delighted Philip and the others : there was Theobald Gerlach, from Billigheim in the Palatinate ; and Peter Günther, who lectured on rhetoric ; and John Brentz, whose massive folios survive to bear testimony to the scholarship and piety of his riper ministry. It was in those days that Philip, as is the manner of generous youths, fell under the spell of the poets ; and it is more than likely that Politian and Baptista of Mantua were not altogether reserved for his solitary hours. Did not the young fellows meet in Philip's sanctum

to listen with rapturous applause to the latest verses of Sorbillo, or to Günther, as he recited passages from Bembo and Politian? It is not in the history, but human nature does not change, and they were German students.

These were some of the sources of influence which Philip felt when he was a student at Heidelberg; but there were surely others which must have laid their spell upon him then, as on all receptive minds they still lay their spell, from the beautiful places in which they have their home. There was the Spirit of history and romance, whose voice Philip must often have heard when evening light touched the old castles and precipices of the Rhine, and gave music and the impression of visible nearness to the legends which hung round them. There was that other enchantress, of whom he must have had glimpses as of a fleeting angel when he wandered through the groves beside the Neckar, whose song he would catch in the waterfall, and her whisper in still hours beside the river as it flowed onwards to its rest. These faces and these unuttered voices we all see and hear, when the gates of the spiritual city are not hopelessly closed; and it was Philip's instinct

from the first to open all the doors and windows of his mind to every free air and space of illuminated sky around him. In later life he wrote of the charm of natural studies, of the presence of God in the world, of the sweet influences and the humanising powers of verse. Yet it may be doubted whether any of the spirit voices were so audible in his heart as when he stood, as he must often have stood, before an old house below the castle rock. It was the house in which his grandfather had lived—in which his father had been a child ; and now that his son would gaze musingly at the silent windows, did not the gentle Spirit of Home seal him of her company, and weave round his affections the bonds which ever drew him back to the old places, and remained unbroken to the last ?

In a home so kindly as that of Dr. Spangel, and with so many inspiring influences, the Heidelberg years, despite University drawbacks, must have been an enjoyable time. But in the autumn of 1512 the kind old professor died ; Philip, who had taken his first degree, was refused the higher, as ‘ too young in appearance and in academic life ’ ; and his own health had once or twice been weakened

by attacks of fever. Under all the circumstances, he was inclined to leave. Reuchlin and Dr. Simler urged the claims of Tübingen : it was Reuchlin's own University, and Simler had himself settled as professor there. Their advice was followed, and in the autumn of 1512 Philip took his farewell of the old Rhine city and turned his face to the South.

CHAPTER III.

TÜBINGEN.

MELANCHTHON went to Tübingen in September 1512. He was there, first as student, later as tutor and professor, for six years. The change from Heidelberg was considerable, and in some important respects it was much for the better. In the younger University—it had been founded only twenty years—there were teachers of deserved reputation, and there was a hopeful degree of sympathy in the place with the New Learning. Stuttgart was not far off, and there Reuchlin might any day be found weaving and unweaving the tangled mysteries of the Talmud, or discoursing with his learned acquaintances, but always ready for a friendly talk.

In the matter of natural scenery and surroundings, Philip had assuredly lost by his removal ; but the wooded hills around Tübingen had a charm of their own, and it was still the Neckar he could hear blending its voice with that of the Ammer as it urged its

rapid course down the valleys of the Black Forest, back again to Heidelberg and the Rhine. It was in the beautiful season, so suitable for the opening of studious sessions, when the leaf puts on its richest tints before it falls, and the sky is deeper and more pensive, and when autumn, as it throws a shadowing veil over the external world, seems to reveal the starry wonders of the student's heaven and the sublimer objects of his desires and his dreams.

Of all the freshmen of the session of 1512 none could well be more apt and eager than Melanchthon, and to his liberal tastes every subject in the curriculum appealed with more or less persuasive attractiveness. To Professor von Stadian, who lectured on Aristotle, he soon became drawn by the charm of his congenial character. 'I loved him,' he wrote in later days, 'as I would my father.' Professor Brassican he found a worthy successor of John Hungar—a clear and sensible grammarian, an effective teacher, and an able man. In the astronomical auditorium he listened to discussions on a subject which he had found so fascinating at Heidelberg; and there was much in Dr. Stöffler's genial character which

won respect, and justified the complimentary dedications which Philip, when he was himself a professor and an author, addressed to his early instructor. But it may be doubted whether any of the class-rooms became so favourite a resort or so entirely suited Philip's tastes as that in which Professor Heinrich Bebel discoursed on *belles-lettres*, and ~~ex-~~patiated on the beauties and inspiration of classical Latin verse. Bebel is one of the early German Humanists whose name, though somewhat distantly, is still remembered with respect for the undoubted services which he rendered to the cause of liberal learning. Like Melanchthon himself, he had been a precocious student, a 'laureate poet' when only twenty, and he was a man of excellent abilities. He possessed the capital merit of recognising the value, both for matter and style, of the literature of the classic times; and he earned the gratitude of all intelligent students by diverting them from the inflated productions of contemporary writers to the models of juster taste. It was from this time—and the change may be credited in considerable measure to Bebel's influence—that Philip laid aside Bembo and Baptista

for Virgil and Terence, and addressed himself to the serious study of the old masters of literature. It was Bebel's excellent habit to enliven his lectures by giving details of his authors' personal history as well as by sympathetic criticism on their works. And his little book of *Pleasanteries*—still to be seen in the nooks of some scholars' libraries—makes it easy to understand by its jovial, if only too brusque anecdotes, how racy and how memorable his prelections on the poets and orators may well have been.

But students often find that no class lectures are so inspiring as the debates and fraternisings celebrated in their own rooms ; and it is more than probable that the development of Melanchthon while in Tübingen was less influenced by his professors, however excellent some of them were, than by his own reading, and by the 'Attic nights' which his friends and he used to pass together at home. His fellow-lodger was John Schurff, and one of his earliest and most intimate companions, who had matriculated the same year as himself, John Hussgen, or, as as we now know him, Æcolampadius, afterwards the Reformer of Basle. In Tübingen there was as yet no Greek

Chair, and no professor of that dangerous tongue ; but Philip and Œcolampadius studied Hesiod together as they best could. 'Remember,' Philip wrote many years afterwards, and with inimitable tenderness of recollection—'remember, when Œcolampadius and I were reading the *Works and Days*, and when I, a lad then, was eager in my astronomical pursuits, there was no one in the whole staff of teachers except Stöffler who could help us in knotty passages about the constellations.' In Hebrew, Philip's unfailing and enthusiastic friend was Reuchlin, and the kind old scholar would often come over to Tübingen to stay in Philip's room and help him by liberal communication of information and loans of books. Among these were some which, in the long run, awoke far deeper and more enduring influences than even the classics of Greece. At Heidelberg, Philip had met Wimpfeling, and to know Wimpfeling and Reuchlin was to hear of Wessel and Gerson—those teachers in a dark age of what has been felicitously described as 'the most excellent of the sciences.' In Tübingen he made closer acquaintance with the writings of these 'Reformers before the Reformation' ; he would

also hear of, and in all probability he would read, some of Luther's early books. But there was no book given by Reuchlin to his grand-nephew which so absorbed his attention as a copy of the Latin Bible. A few years before there had been issued from the press of Froben at Basle a portable edition of the Vulgate, and it soon became Philip's constant companion. 'He carried it with him everywhere,' says Camerarius, 'and read it at all times and places.' Some of his suspicious companions noticed it with him at church: it was larger than the regulation prayer-book, and must be one of the pernicious books of the New Learning which ought to be proscribed. But the proscription did not take effect, and the great classic did its quiet work. On the wall of his room Philip had written some of the pithy aphorisms for which his mother was notable. The Latin Bible recalled the devout words and ways of his father, and must have made them all the more impressive.

In 1514, Philip took his master's degree, the first among eleven candidates, and attained the accompanying status as *privat-docent* or tutor. Accordingly, he formed

Froben

classes in his rooms, and began to read Cicero and Virgil. In those early and unquiet days of liberal learning, some of its friends had associated themselves in congenial clubs. There was the Society of the Rhine (1496), of the Danube (1501); there was a third at Strasburg (1524); a fourth in Bavaria. And, somewhat in imitation of his seniors, the new tutor formed a Collegiate Association of his own. Some of the names of the young Humanists are still remembered, but most of them can be found only in neglected records. Ambrose Blaur was, in all probability, one of the club, and in the old Swabian land, where he was one of the first and most earnest preachers of reform, and in Constanx, his birthplace, the story of his devoted life is an enduring possession. One of the young men was John Setzer (Secerius), who afterwards issued from his printing-office at Hagenau many of the treatises of Luther and Melanchthon. On another name a soft light still lingers: it is that of Bernard Maur, a very young member of this little society, whom Philip evidently drew more closely than others to his heart. He alludes to his graceful personality and generous temperament, and several of Philip's

earliest publications were, in prefaces of wise counsel and affectionate tone, dedicated to this companion of his youth.

For, like every true lover of books, Philip was always contemplating the production of some of his own. He had already edited several tractates in Greek and Latin ; but in 1516 Professor Bebel died ; Brassican was called to the vacant chair ; Melanchthon to that of Rhetoric and History, and thus was both need and opportunity for more serious labours. Accordingly, in 1519 appeared a new edition of the *Rhetoric* of Rudolph Agricola, with a preface full of commendation of the subject and reflections on the age in which it was so misunderstood. The next year appeared an edition of Terence. The Roman playwright had from their first acquaintance become a special favourite with his editor, and Melanchthon repeatedly praises him as a model of colloquial Latinity and a teacher of excellent morals. Melanchthon's edition of Terence is notable as the first in which the Comedies were printed in verse. It is characteristic of the obscurantism of the time that the worthy poet had been treated as a prose writer, and the Tübingen

edition must have been a startling innovation to some of the earlier readers.

In the same year Philip appeared as editor in another field. Always encyclopædic in his tastes, he was interested in all the sciences, and they all more or less engaged him, none perhaps more powerfully than history, with its vast and populous stage, its endless variety of event, its infinite illustration of human hope and fear. A colleague in the University, John Nauclerus, had compiled a Handbook of General History, but the book needed revision and enlargement, and the publishers put it into the hands of the new History Professor. It was issued in 1516, and became one of the most popular manuals of the subject.

To this revision succeeded a translation of Aratus on Meteorology, with a preface full of the sense of the charm and the value of the study of Nature. A Greek grammar was also approaching completion; but a literary enterprise greater than any previous one was rising in Philip's active mind. This was a new Aristotle: an edition of the great philosopher, who till then, the prospectus pungently complained, had been 'more

obscure than a Delphic oracle,' revised freshly from the best manuscripts, and interpreted with all possible accuracy. Philip would, he hoped, restore Aristotle to Germany as Ficinus had given Plato to Italy. Already Pirkheimer of Nuremberg had promised to help: so had Reuchlin, Capito, Simler, and other competent men. It was an immense project, and it was undertaken with characteristic energy; but long before it could be accomplished Philip had found the absorbing task of his life.

This list of Melanchthon's literary work in Tübingen is an incomplete one, but it is sufficient to show that he was fully tasking his strength. Happily, there were occasional breathing-times, and intervals of delightful change. None of the Tübingen walks was so much a favourite, and none was so familiar, as that which led along the Stuttgart road to the home of Reuchlin. 'My fellow-students and I,' Philip writes, 'used often to visit him: the more sober and bookish of us would give most of our time to the library, examining the rare or the new books, and listening to him as he talked about them. The others, and ultimately all of us, would go

into the garden and enjoy ourselves there.' How delightful a glimpse of those vanished days—of the kind old scholar—of the generous young men! One seems to hear them discussing the latest news, starting the questions students have started in every age, rolling a chorus, filling the moonlit roads with infinite conversation as they strode back again to Tübingen.

Some of the students used to call Reuchlin's house the Museum of Europe. Here were Hebrew manuscripts in mysterious and uncanny characters; dark volumes of the Talmud; Greek authors, some in ancient parchment, some in brass-clasped pigskin, covered folios with carmine edges, fresh from the presses of Oporin and Froben; Latin illuminated missals; Oriental curiosities; strange collections of natural history monstrosities; objects which seemed in all the *totum scibile* to belong to no ascertained category. The genius of the collection, so marvellous to many of the visitors, was happily a very benevolent one, and most communicative of information. He was in the autumn of his life, his heart was in his studies and in his friends, and all he desired or dared to

hope for was undisturbed leisure. But the modest desire was doomed to the saddest disappointment.

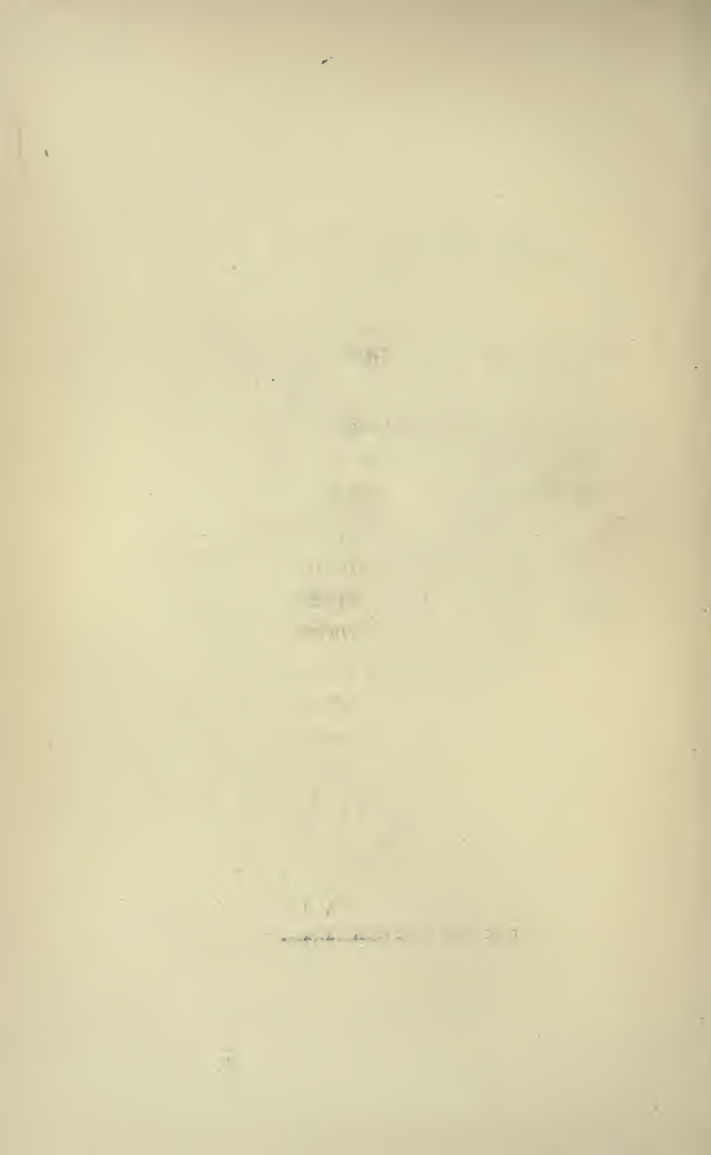
The vexatious persecution of Reuchlin in his controversy with the wretched obscurantists of his time occupies, indeed, all the years of Melanchthon's stay at Tübingen, and goes only too far beyond it. The story has often been told : it can only be recalled here. How Pfefferkorn, the Christianised Jew, the miserable tool of the monks, raised the cry that all Hebrew books except the Old Testament should be burned : how Reuchlin's opinion was asked, and with what excellent sense he gave his advice on the absurd demand : how the malicious hatred of the monks turned upon him and put his life in actual peril : how the friends of liberal learning took their stand beside him : how the Pope was appealed to : how the fortune of the strange, dismal controversy turned at length in his favour, but only when he was almost worn out—all this may be read elsewhere. It is more immediately within Melanchthon's life that from the beginning he was found close beside his noble friend. He prefaced the *Epistolæ Clarorum Virorum*, which bore so distin-

guished testimony to Reuchlin's dignity and worth, and contributed to the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, which filled Germany with reverberations of laughter at his contemptible enemies. But Philip was perilously near suffering for his interference. Tübingen was stirred by the controversy, as all the Fatherland was, and feeling became viciously keen. Some of Reuchlin's foes had an eye, Philip found, on himself. He was coarsely satirised, and his sensitive temper was naturally wounded and depressed. Towards the end of 1517 his letters began to reflect the change. If he speak out his mind, he says, he is threatened ; if he try to go in the old grooves of custom, he is demoralised. But the crisis of his affairs was close at hand.

One day in the spring of the following year Reuchlin had an important letter from the Elector of Saxony. The Elector was concerned about his new University of Wittenberg ; he would not see it behind the times ; two professors should be appointed—one for Hebrew, another for Greek : could the veteran scholar advise him as to the choice of suitable men ? In a fortnight Reuchlin gave his reply. For the Hebrew Chair he



THE ELECTOR FREDERICK.



had thought of Æcolampadius, but he was committed to other work. Dr. Riccius might be approached; or Conrad Pellican, who had published a grammar of the language. As to Greek, he had less difficulty; there was a brilliant young kinsman of his own—Philip Melanchthon of Tübingen, to whom the Ingoldstadt and the Leipsic authorities were already turning their attention, and the ablest and the most promising man he knew. He might, in any case, go to the Saxon University on trial. The Elector trusted much to Reuchlin's judgment; he had already heard of Melanchthon, and the matter was at once arranged. Reuchlin's letter to the young man he loved and praised so generously is full of honour to his own kind heart. He knew how modest and how sensitive Melanchthon was, and he encouraged him to take with a stout heart the tide which, at this turning, would, he was sure, lead on to fortune. 'Here is the good Elector's letter with his offer of the position, signed by his own hand. I will not quote poetry, but I will remind you of the words God addressed to faithful Abraham: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy

father's house, unto a land that I will show thee : and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing.”

And accordingly, but not without some characteristic misgivings, Philip determined to go. The Tübingen professors generally were not particularly sorry ; others, including the friendly Dr. Simler, shook their heads and said they were losing the ablest among their younger men. Even Duke Ulrich, unwilling his Swabian University should be deprived of a scholar likely to be famous, sent Philip a message suggesting he should become a priest and take to theology, and promising he should not lose by the change. Philip knew, however, too much both of the current theology and of his Tübingen colleagues to be tempted by the proposal. His books were soon packed ; he took affectionate leave of his own people at Bretten, and of his faithful Reuchlin at Stuttgart ; and, with the old tender words about Abraham in his mind, left his own country and kinsfolk, and turned his face to the North, wondering, no doubt, what his promised land would prove to be.

When he came to Leipsic, he was received

with exceptional honour, *fêted* at a banquet, and urged to make it the end of his journey, and settle down there. But the invisible hands drew him on. At length, lifting up his eyes, he saw before him the towers of Wittenberg and the deputation sent to meet him and escort him to his rooms. The first words of Reuchlin's interpreted prophecy were already fulfilling themselves. But how little could Philip, or indeed Reuchlin, have foreseen what a fulfilment—surely higher than his highest imaginings—was to be reserved for the last!

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY YEARS IN WITTENBERG.

Wittenberg
1518

MELANCHTHON delivered his introductory lecture in the Greek Chair of Wittenberg on August 29, 1518, and the date has a significance of its own in the literary annals of Europe. Seldom, if perhaps ever before, had the University auditorium been filled with an audience so distinguished and so expectant. The subject-matter of the new chair had, even to those who knew little or nothing of Greek, a certain fascination of its own, and great anticipations had been stirred about the new professor. The two intellectual chiefs at the time were Erasmus and Reuchlin, and both had spoken with altogether exceptional praise of the young scholar whom the Elector had invited to his Saxon University. 'What hopes this young man, I might almost say this boy, has awakened!' Erasmus had exclaimed. 'What keenness of insight he has—what a charm of style—what a maturity of learning!' In one respect,

Erasmus

however, and for the moment the subject of a eulogy so generous proved somewhat of a disappointment. Below the middle size, slight, and surprisingly youthful, and with a shy and awkward manner which emphasised the stammering utterance of his first sentences, he seemed hardly likely to prove himself worthy of the forecast of his partial friends. But as he gathered confidence, and as he caught the inspiration of his subject, the first unfavourable impressions were soon and conclusively corrected. His voice grew clear and forceful, his actions animated, while the sparkling eye and flushing forehead gave emphasis to statements which in themselves were becoming wonderfully interesting. Melanchthon's Latin had much of the old classic grace, and it was accentuated by occasional quotations from the Greek and Hebrew. And then, fresh from the controversy of Reuchlin and the monks, his words breathed occasionally that spirit of battle which students especially love.

In his earlier passages, Melanchthon sketched the history of the decline and the darkening of liberal studies with a fulness of knowledge which probably no one but himself

possessed. And then, with excellent sense, he outlined the methods of a restored and emancipated learning. The nobler classics of Latin, and especially of Greek, literature, must be studied directly and afresh, not merely as the teachers of grammatical expression, but of morals and of taste ; and, wisely used, Homer and Plato and Virgil may instruct more effectually than the most pretentious philosophy. And as in the case of the masters of the ancient Gentile wisdom, so must it be, and in an especial degree, with theology. The long-neglected tongue of the Psalmists and Prophets must speak again in its own incorrupt eloquence ; the single and genuine sense of the Gospel must, in its own language, be restored ; the lumber of obscuring commentary must be put aside. But, above all, it must be understood that the highest attainment of all true theology is the knowledge of Christ. Sweeter than the most fragrant spices, the wisdom of that great Master has an aroma which mere human learning has never breathed. It is when the Spirit guides us to the ultimate source of truth, and the mind is disciplined and enriched with true culture that the doors of

Divine learning are opened to us : the law of Christ becomes full of light, and we taste something of the pure wisdom of Heaven. The closing sentences reminded the students of some of the difficulties as well as of the rewards which were before them, and assured them that all the energies of their professor's own mind would be devoted to their service, and to the attainment of the noble objects he had described.

A discourse in which wisdom and knowledge were so attractively blended deserved generous recognition, and it was a promising symptom of Wittenberg feeling that it was received with universal applause. When Melancthon sat down, perhaps the most enthusiastic auditor was Luther himself. A few days later, Dr. Spalatin, the Court preacher, learned from him that the new professor had delivered with general admiration a 'beautiful and learned' oration, and Luther's anxieties were already stirred lest so able a colleague should, in any unexpected way, be lost to the University. The Elector should be heartily thanked for the gift of such a man, and Dr. Spalatin, having these things greatly under his control, should see

that Philip's salary and all the arrangements of his chair should put him beyond the reach of temptation from any other quarter.

In the meantime a course so auspiciously begun proceeded with great enthusiasm. The attendance on the Greek lectures was immense: Philip often saw himself confronted by a crowd of two thousand—professors, ministers, and dignitaries of various rank conspicuous in the throng. The books chosen for prelection were the Iliad of Homer and the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus; and no selection could better illustrate Philip's views as to the duties as well as the dignity of his chair. From the first, instinctively guided by the devout sense, caught perhaps from the piety of his father, Philip was possessed by the belief that the end of all true learning is good living, and that the culture of the intellect has its worthiest result in the purification of the heart. When in Tübingen he had acted on this noble principle, and in later life he repeatedly urged that authors should be valued primarily according to their ethical work. Accordingly, when he came to consider the subjects of his prelections he had little difficulty in the choice. The fountain of the

earlier Greek wisdom was undoubtedly Homer, and in his delightful pages there was treasure of grammatical, historical, and ethical lore. But there was another classic as much higher and better than Homer, as it was altogether divine and true to his own principles: the professor could not allow his students to neglect that source of undefiled truth. The Apostle of the Gentiles deserved early and special study, and much of his ripest and most practical wisdom lay folded in the pages of his epistle to that young friend who, like many of the Wittenberg students, was looking forward to a ministerial life. No choice of subjects could have been better, and to all responsive minds it must have been delightful, after they had had in the Homer lectures enough of grammar and of the gods, to turn to the pastoral letter recalling the days of living Christianity, and lifting the thoughts in every sentence to things unseen and eternal.

It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that so sudden popular interest could endure indefinitely, and that the Greek class-room remained as thronged and as enthusiastic as it did at first. Superficial curiosity is soon satisfied, and fashions live by change, and

Paul

there were in Wittenberg additional reasons why the number of Melanchthon's genuine and effective students should be greatly reduced. In our modern colleges the press is so vitally connected with the chairs that class-books suitable for every course are easily accessible; but when Melanchthon lectured the case was perplexingly difficult. In order to enable his students to read the Epistle to Titus in the original the professor had to prepare a special edition; and one of the earliest difficulties to be overcome in this and similar cases was the want of a fount of Greek type. Some years later, when he proposed to discuss one of the Orations of Demosthenes, the only copy of that author within reach was Philip's own, and only four men were able or ready to make copies of the necessary text for themselves. A similar state of things existed as to other necessary literary apparatus, and involved a great deal of laborious industry on the part of Melanchthon. Hardly, indeed, had a month passed from the delivery of the inaugural lecture when he wrote to Dr. Spalatin: 'I hope to see issued immediately editions of a Dialogue of Lucian, two Discourses of Plutarch; one of Athenagoras;

a Greek Hymn ; the Banquet of Plato, with a treatise on the Arrangement of Studies, a Greek Lexicon, and perhaps several other things.' His anticipation in regard to several of these was premature ; but Melanchthon's industry all through his life as editor as well as professor was auspiciously great.

These engrossing academic pursuits were unexpectedly interrupted when Philip accompanied Luther and other friends to the discussion in Leipsic on the disputed points of theology raised in the Reformation movement. An interruption much more eventful indeed than could at the time have been anticipated, for it was the occasion of involving Melanchthon in various anxious tasks, from which, had he foreseen them, he would have assuredly shrunk. But in the meantime theological controversy was an untasted luxury, and he went as a leisurely and half-concerned spectator. In outward aspect, and in all the attractions which appeal to those who delight in polemics, the Leipsic discussion was an impressive spectacle. The Wittenberg professors were accompanied to the scene by hundreds of students armed with halberds. The place of debate was a

hall in the Ducal Castle, the appointments were of spectacular impressiveness, and the ecclesiastical tournament lasted for several days. The details of this as of subsequent conferences belong to a history of the time. But the consequences to Philip personally of this visit to Leipsic were of the most important kind. It revealed to him, as perhaps nothing else could so effectively have done, the difference between the theology and the spirit of the Schools and that of the New Testament, and it engaged him far beyond his intentions in investigations and controversy of his own. Dr. Eck, that practised scholastic pugilist, had indeed made a deeper impression than even he had at all imagined. The policy and the views of Luther became more decisively defined than before ; many hesitating minds were resolved for the Reformation ; and Melanchthon, whose aims had been limited to the cultivation of a Christian literature, was constrained to go much further.

After the conference, Melanchthon wrote to his friend Bugenhagen a brief but very instructive account of what happened. The letter was printed, and came into Dr. Eck's



DR. HUGENHAGEN.

hands, who, irritated with a previous grudge at Reuchlin's kinsman, gave it a characteristic reply. This Melanchthon answered with excellent sense and conclusiveness. So effective indeed was his share in this first passage of arms, that Luther would not rest till his ally had undertaken, in addition to the duties of his Greek Chair, those of a Theological Lectureship. The degree of Bachelor of Divinity was conferred upon him a few months afterwards, but a higher honour he would never accept. From the purely theological position he instinctively shrank; his place, he repeatedly said, was that of a Humanist: his work to develop a culture which should serve and supplement direct Christian truth. But the force of circumstance was more effective than personal preference. When Luther was carried off to the Wartburg, the theological faculty of the Sorbonne at Paris delivered itself of a pompous condemnation of his views, while from Florence came an assault levelled against his heroic *Letter to the Nobles of the German Nation*. To both of these Philip replied, and in a way which shows how clearly, at this period, his mind discerned the great principles of Evangelical truth.

There was another and a much more important result of Melanchthon's share in the controversies of his friend. During Luther's absence, he had chosen the Epistle to the Romans as the subject-matter of his lectures, and drawn up from that great summary of the Gospel, as well as from other Biblical sources, a series of compendious and classified statements of Scriptural truth. These were primarily for his own use, and, recalling Cicero's phrase, he labelled them 'Common Places'—*Loci Communes*. The Synoptical System of Divinity grew in his hands, and in 1521 he consented to its publication. The book had evidently come in season; it was read with extraordinary interest, and before the following year was out it had reached its fourth edition. 'It is a book of gold,' Luther said, in his generously exaggerating way, 'and worthy of a place in the Canon.' By the time that Philip had begun to revise it for edition after edition, he was fairly committed to theology.

To compile a manual of divinity is, however, a much easier thing than to discuss doctrines with passionate preachers, or still a tempest of popular excitement. But in the

strange development of affairs, these were the particular tasks to which, in the spring of 1522, Philip was imperiously called. During Luther's absence in his Wartburg Patmos, the Augustinian monks of Wittenberg had risen up in ecclesiastical revolt, headed by the excellent but unstable Dr. Carlstadt, and the storm rolled its breakers, as if by natural trend of the shore, to the feet of Luther's henchman and friend. Nor was this all. From his own kindly Swabian land, where the peasant folk of the Black Forest had lived so long in uncomplaining quiet, came ominous sounds of dangerous unrest. The Peasants' War was enough to try stronger nerves and a more masterful rule than Philip ever possessed; but when Prince Philip, remembering that Melanchthon was himself a Swabian, asked his counsel and assistance, the appeal could not be refused. He gave the prince the result of his best judgment in an elaborate statement on the value of the peasants' claims. In the meantime, some of the leaders took refuge in Wittenberg, and Philip received one of them into his own house. If the most amiable good sense and the kindest of kind reasoning could have availed with either Thomas Storsch or

with Dr. Carlstadt, the tumult would soon have been allayed. But the Augustinians were bent on extreme measures, and the Anabaptist Saul was beyond the influence of Melanchthon's music. Just when things were at their worst, but in time to save the battle, Luther returned from the Wartburg, and his perplexed colleague breathed again freely.

These were the tempests which vexed the autumn of 1521 and the spring of the following year. But it is pleasant to recollect that just before these troublous times had invaded his peace, Philip had come into the possession of two of the chiefest blessings of the life of man—the first, a devoted wife, the other, a scarcely less warmly devoted friend.

In the story of Melanchthon's marriage there is hardly any romance. The indefatigable Luther, ever anxious about Philip's welfare, had reached the conclusion at a very early stage of their acquaintance that, for many indisputable reasons, he should have a wife. The shy little scholar, absorbed in his books and his students, may have admitted the contention in a distant and theoretical way, but his friends were bent on something more

practical. The reasoning must be removed from the speculative region and be embodied in a more personal and persuasive form. The Wittenberg Burgomaster Krapp had a charming daughter—Katharine became the conclusive minor premiss of the syllogism. Looked at in this way, Philip had to acknowledge that there was force in the argument. It would have been more in accordance with modern ideas if there had been no necessity for arguments at all; but the facts must unfold their own oddly-interesting story.

‘I followed the counsel of my friends,’ admits the guileless but ungallant Greek professor. ‘And I,’ surely Katharine had whispered to herself, ‘followed the counsel of my own heart.’ The honours of the history evidently belong to the gentle lady. She was drawn to her worthy suitor by the only argument which has ever prevailed with hearts like hers. ‘She loved her husband,’ said Camerarius, who knew Katharine well, ‘with deep and tender affection.’ After all, Philip seems to have been but half just to his better self. ‘I cannot venture to say how unexpected a gift was my wife, how little I was worthy of her; but she was such a gift

in grace and endowment of nature as one might have hesitated to ask from Heaven.'

The marriage was celebrated in November, 1520, and every successive year proved how full it was of the tender if perilous delights of domestic love.

About a year before Philip's marriage, when he was at the Leipsic Conference, he heard much of a gifted youth very desirous to make his acquaintance—one Joachim Camerarius (Kammermeister), then at Bamberg. A friend was going that way, and a few courteous Greek verses from Philip made further correspondence easy. It was not till 1521, when the plague drove many of the students from Leipsic to Wittenberg, that there were opportunities of closer acquaintance. From this period to the end, no one was so entirely the brother of Melanchthon's heart as Camerarius.

Only three years Philip's junior, and, like himself, variously gifted, precocious, of grave spiritual temper, and devoted to Greek, Joachim was entirely fitted to become, as soon he was affectionately called, his *alter ego*,—his other self. During the exciting years when they were together at Wittenberg, each

inspired and helped the other ; and when, in 1524, Camerarius left the University, a continual interchange of letters continued the intimacy which had been formed. In the delightful annals of friendship, few chapters are more pleasant than that in which Melanchthon and Camerarius meet each other again ; and their correspondence—a true Cardiphonia—is still preserved by its intimacy and sweetness. Nor has one friend often told the story of the life of another more attractively than has Camerarius in his affectionate, if almost too partial, biography of Melanchthon.

This admirable scholar, unequalled perhaps among his contemporaries in pure classical learning, became in later years eminent and influential in a very high degree. At Melanchthon's suggestion, he was elected Rector of the Nuremberg Gymnasium ; and his subsequent life there, and at the University of Leipsic, was, in the sphere of educational influence, hardly less distinguished than that of his illustrious friend. In the epistles of Melanchthon, the first addressed to Camerarius is dated January 1, 1523, and the series is continued uninterrupted to the end. It is

in this correspondence one may see from Melanchthon's point of view, as can be seen nowhere else, the light and shadow of the inner history of the Reformation.

Sometimes, when delicate matters are in hand, he writes in Greek, reasonably presuming that, even should the letter fall into other hands, nobody except Joachim would be able to read it. But though often too monotonously expressive of his own despondency, the letters of Philip are no less interesting than they are expressive of his excellent good sense and of his gentle heart. In the ecclesiastical histories of the time, as we catch glimpses of him in conference after conference—those packed and often passionate assemblies—he is seen at a distance, and often to his disadvantage. But when he goes home and pours out his heart to Joachim—sometimes in two or three letters a day—one may see how much better Philip himself was than his best books, how much wiser than his Greek philosophy, how sensitive and conscientious, how tender and true.

The very first letter, indeed, lies under one of those cloud-spots of darkness never long absent from that wind-swept field of sun and

shade. Philip writes to comfort Camerarius in severe personal sorrow, and the kind words must have touched him all the more as they came from a heart almost as heavy as his own. 'Think of those who have suffered before us, whom our Father in heaven has given for our examples, and remember, Joachim, that you are Christ's. You cannot easily believe how these examples of suffering patience comfort me when I, like you, am in distress.'

The truth was that both friends, in addition to their actual troubles, were unstrung and over-tasked, and both needed the relief of change and rest. The fact must have been evident to his Wittenberg acquaintances, and when the suggestion of a holiday was made by young William Nissen, one of Philip's friends, it commended itself by its entire reasonableness. Nissen was one of the students whose gifts and amiable character had endeared him to Philip; he had been the master of a school in Frankfort-on-the-Main, and now, after three years in Wittenberg, he was about to return. It was the most delightful time of the year, and why should not the over-worked professor—suffer-

ing from insomnia, worried with Reformation cares—come with him? Their mutual friends Burckhardt and Gerbelius would join the party, and so, of course, would Camerarius.

Philip was easily persuaded, but he had conscientious scruples whether he should leave his work, and he would consult Luther. In that quarter there was no hesitancy; in his genial way Luther gave Philip his parental blessing, told him to be off, assured him that his classes would be cared for. The matter was accordingly arranged, and the episode of Philip's first holiday in the vast and crowded canvas of the Reformation age is like one of the glimpses of peaceful scenery, a cottage with children, a distant hillside in the sun, by which the painter of some great piece of storm or tragedy sometimes relieves its too oppressive gloom.

It was on April 16, 1524, when the five friends left the gates of Wittenberg behind them and turned their faces to the fresh country fields and woods. They were on horseback, and as they rode along they heard the immemorial song of spring, saw the deep clear heaven, that is clouded for a moment only to be clear again, uttered in friendly

talk the thoughts of hope which rise in the heart in the presence of natural beauty and peace. A few stages brought the travellers to Leipsic, where Philip and Camerarius visited the Humanist Mosellanus, only to find him on his death-bed ; he died the same day, fading out of the world just when it was beginning to resound with the victories for which he had fought. At Fulda the friends were welcomed by Adam Krafft, who deserves to be remembered were it only because he first introduced Camerarius to Melanchthon ; and by that gifted, but as it proved unstable friend of the Reformation, Crotus Rubianus. The first news the Wittenberg party were told at Fulda was that the obscure report they had heard of the death of the chivalrous knight and scholar Von Hutten was only too true. He had fallen at last, not yet thirty-five years old, in a little island—the last vain refuge from his enemies—in the Lake of Constance, and his fearless crest would be seen no more in the wave of the battle for learning and liberty.

From Fulda, past the beech woods of Buchorn, they rode into Frankfort, and there Philip spent an enjoyable time with the

accomplished physician Carinus, and here Nissen left the party to resume his duties. But the best of the journey was to come, for in a few days Philip saw in the distance the clustering roofs of the little town where he was born. No spot of earth was so dear to him ; it had never seemed so dear before, and, dismounting from the saddle, he knelt on the ground in a flush of devout joy—*Vaterlandserde! wie dank ich dir, Herr, dass ich sie wieder betreten darf.* They rode up the little street, in full view, no doubt, from all its doors and windows, and soon were at the old home where Philip's mother and his step-father, for she had married two years before, and his brother George, looking pale and delicate, received them with respectful joy.

At Bretten the little company of travellers was still further reduced, for Camerarius with Burckhardt and Gerbelius was off to Basle to visit Erasmus, and Philip was left with his own people. What conversings during those days the old room heard between mother and son ; what inquiries she had to answer about early friends ; what questionings he had to satisfy about the far-off great Wittenberg, and the men whose names fame had blown

on every wind into the little town itself ! And to think that her son was one of those famous people, that his name was being heard of over Germany along with theirs ! And if it seemed too wonderful to be true, how much easier to believe it when Dr. Grynæus and Dr. Busch, with all the dignity of a special deputation, came one day to Bretten to present to Philip, from the faculty of the Heidelberg University, a splendid piece of plate ; and when a messenger from the great Cardinal Campeggi arrived with tempting offers, if only Philip would disengage himself from the Reformers and devote his services to the old Church of his fathers. Dr. Nansen could, however, make nothing of the incorruptible scholar ; ‘ I will never desert,’ said Philip, ‘ what I have ascertained to be the truth.’ His mother may have admired her son’s stedfastness rather than approved of it, for she still remained in the old Church, and she seems to have had her own suspicions that the new people in Wittenberg, or perhaps the new wife Philip had chosen, instead of coming back for one to Bretten, were urging things too far. But these were delightful days, and when his three friends came back from Basle, and it

was necessary for them all to think of returning home, it must have seemed a painfully short holiday.

But the inevitable hour came, and they left the little town with its kind people at last, and turned their faces to the North. As they were nearing Frankfort they had an adventure which with something of romance had much more of unforeseen importance. A company of horsemen were seen approaching, evidently of high rank ; they turned out to be the retinue of Prince Philip of Hesse, and the frank young prince himself. He had heard of Melanchthon's visit ; he was deeply interested in the Reformation movement, though not yet decided for it, and it struck him, as the little party drew near, scholars as they evidently were, that among them might be the eminent man he wished to meet. 'Which of you is Philip Melanchthon?' he asked ; and when Philip would have dismounted he courteously compelled him to keep his seat, and assured him he need have no apprehensions for his personal safety. 'I am not apprehensive,' was the answer, 'and I am not a person of importance enough to make my detention of any value.' The prince smiled

suggestively. 'And yet,' he said, 'if I handed you over to Cardinal Campeggi he might think differently!' And then he urged Philip, after a short conference, to spend a night with him; he was anxious to discuss important theological questions, and they could talk them over at leisure. It was a characteristically liberal offer, but Philip begged he might be allowed to proceed, and promised in writing a fuller and more careful statement of the points in debate than could be given in conversation. On this friendly understanding they parted, the prince to Heidelberg, the academic party to Frankfort, and some days afterwards to Wittenberg. The promised statement was in due time sent, and in the spring of the following year Philip was delighted to learn that the prince had declared himself in agreement with the friends of Reformation, and taken his stand at their side.

CHAPTER V.

IN WITTENBERG—LUTHER'S DEATH.

IT was midsummer when Philip and Camerarius and their two friends returned from their holiday to the friendly streets and little garden closes of Wittenberg. Unhappily there were fresh anxieties waiting him and much deferred work, and he soon begins to speak again of the 'miserable insomnia,' which had vexed him before they started. Then came the news that their friend William Nissen, who had planned the pleasant outing, had been drowned in the Elbe; and a few weeks afterwards Camerarius had to leave Wittenberg to attend to work of his own. These also were the heavy days of the 'Peasants' War.' The letters of this autumn are full of a sense of loneliness and unrest. 'I am working like a wretch in prison,' he writes to Camerarius, 'without congenial friend to talk to. I miss you constantly, and books are all the compensation I have, with a few gossips such as

they are. When I asked Anna to-day at table' (Anna is his little girl) 'where Joachim and Michael were, she said, in such a pretty stammering way, *cum perbellule ebalbutivisset*, "they will soon come back again." I hope it will turn out a good omen, and that we shall indeed soon see you once more.'

There is a momentary forgetfulness in some of these vexed words, for Luther and Œcolampadius were within reach, and Philip's gentle wife, *uxor viri amantissima*, was beside him. How could he forget, even for a moment, so near and dear a friend! But he was assuredly in weak health, and his habitual wistfulness of depression often lay heavy on him.

Happily there occurred a pleasant interruption to the monotony of his work and care. The good Nurembergers were bent on founding a new college worthy of their famous city, and receptive of the new intellectual light spreading everywhere over Germany, and they urged Melanchthon to become the rector. He replied in a letter which is entirely characteristic:—

'It is a tempting suggestion; many things plead for Nuremberg—but I must not go. The good Elector has first claim on all my

services, such as they are. To tell you the truth, I am not equal to the task. You want an orator—a man of presence and of popular address. I am anything but that. When I was brought to Wittenberg I was a boy ; the responsibility was far too serious for me ; I must not allow myself to be placed in such a position again. There are far better men for your work : there is Camerarius—there is Johan Hess.'

From a man less genuine, or less conscious of his own limitations, the self-depreciatory letter would have been suspiciously like an affectation. But it was meant for an entirely honest portrait—the artist's sketch of himself, with a sensitive conscience guiding his unfaltering pencil. Nevertheless, though he cannot go as rector, he will gladly accept the invitation to deliver the inaugural address ; and accordingly, in the early summer of 1526, he went to Nuremberg. The accounts of this visit—it was but too short, he said regretfully—are a delightful episode in a record which was becoming more and more sombre in its tone. Melanchthon was received with all the fine old hospitality and every expression of honour. He was the guest of the generous



ALBERT DÜRER.

Pirkheimer ; met Albert Dürer, explored his portfolios with admiration, breathed with delight, as one breathes sweet garden airs, the liberal atmosphere of thought in which such men moved. Dürer was engaged at the time on his fine study of the Four Evangelists, and the noble head of St. John is that of Melanchthon. Nor did Philip ever pronounce a eulogium of the higher learning more expressive of his own ideals, more entirely felicitous and inspiring, than that delivered at the inauguration of the Gymnasium of Nuremberg. He compares the stately old city to Florence, and already sees the houses domesticated in a nobler northern home, and diffusing from it their gracious influences all over Germany.

The first Diet of Spires was held in the same year. The practical result of the negotiations was the recognition of the great principle of parity between the old religion and the new : the admission, in the meantime at least, of the right of Reform to develop and establish itself alongside of the ancient forms. The immediate and most important consequence of this arrangement was the action of the Elector of Saxony and Philip of

Hesse in setting about the establishment of the Reformation in their own territories. In carrying out this excellent plan the first step was to ascertain, by a visitation of the churches, the actual state of ecclesiastical and religious affairs. Accordingly, the Elector appointed a commission of twenty-eight deputies, and, in the summer of 1527, Philip, with five colleagues, began the work of visitation in Thuringia. They left Wittenberg in July, and a month was passed in friendly conference with pastors and people. In the meantime the plague had broken out in Wittenberg, and the students and professors, Luther only excepted, had migrated to Jena. This business of visitation, resumed in the two following as well as in later years, is an important and interesting part of Melanchthon's activity and influence. He found a state of things which to a good many of our times would appear shocking, to others amusing; to Philip, with his grave, sensitive temper, it was very depressing. He found an almost universal ignorance of the elementary principles of religious truth, the oddest survivals of an ancient not quite outworn paganism. Some of the clergy administered the mass

according to the old manner in one place, and the Lord's Supper after the new fashion in another. Some who were vaguely desirous of preaching the Gospel had the most imperfect notion of what it really was. Some expended their oratorical energies in abusing the order of things which was passing away ; some, with perhaps equally good results, did not preach at all. The conduct of many of the priests was scandalous. There was a general neglect of education. 'Do you teach the Ten Commandments to your people?' Philip asked one of these primitive ecclesiastics. 'I have lost the book,' replied the worthy old gentleman. But the picture of the manners of a society passing in a blind sorrowful confusion from the old order of things to the new must be studied elsewhere.

The experience which Philip had thus laboriously gained was used in drafting the outlines and filling in the details of his visitation book for the use of deputies in the reorganisation and establishment of churches. It is a practical compendium of the more essential matters, and, like its author, it is tolerant and kindly. But in an age of

extremists it seemed to some only too liberal, and Philip found himself taken to task by two of his colleagues, both of them old Wittenberg friends. 'The author is a Papist at heart,' one of them courteously wrote; 'he is really an apologist for the monks and their abominable ways.' The controversy is instructive as an illustration of the conditions under which much of Melanchthon's work was done from first to last. But the visitation book has a high value and significance. It may be described as the nucleus of a group of writings in which Melanchthon gave the Saxon churches the beginnings of their pastoral and catechetical theology. In another group, of which the *Loci Communes* is the centre of development, he has given to Lutheranism its body of systematic divinity. On both its positive and its practical side the restored Evangelicalism of the Fatherland received mould and fashion from the same skilful hand.

From these journeyings through the Thuringian valleys, with their strange revelations of the human heart and of old-time manners, the narrative leads us back to the inevitable theological debate. Since he first

made acquaintance with polemical tournaments at Leipsic, Philip had shared in many, and he was to share, before the end, in many more. The year 1529 is memorable for the second Diet of Spires. Strange portents were noticed by those who saw in such unusual things dim hintings of the purposes of God. Philip had unfortunately always been one of these anxious observers, and he watched a comet which blazed along its mysterious path above Wittenberg as one who beheld a door opened in heaven. There was a general sense of apprehension among the Evangelical party that the Diet would prove a crisis in their affairs. In April, 1529, the Diet was opened. The aspect of affairs seemed to confirm the portents. 'Yesterday,' wrote Philip to Camerarius, 'the Imperial Edict was read, and it is in the highest degree alarming. The concessions of the first Diet are withdrawn, and the worst perils threaten those who refuse submission to the new order. You can easily understand our apprehensions. Never was there so large an attendance of bishops: one may read in their looks how they hate us. We are treated as beneath contempt. But I trust that our Lord will

confuse the counsel of those who devise mischief.' The only course open to the outvoted Reformers proved at the same time the best. They submitted the Protest which became famous, and then withdrew. Their policy



SIGNING THE PROTEST AT SPIRES.

became from this time definite and resolute : that thrill was beginning to stir in the blood which men feel in the face of battle. What part Melanchthon took in this defiant step is uncertain : no letter seems to have mentioned it,

and he left the Diet deeply depressed. There was indeed reason for grave thought, but he seems unconscious of the advance which had been made.

But if some of the theologians failed for the moment to recognise the significance of the Protest, the politicians understood it perfectly. At that moment the power of the Emperor Charles was at its height: he had broken the menace of France and occupied Rome. But there was a more formidable danger in the East, and to meet the Turkish power, hanging like a thundercloud over the Hungarian frontier, he needed all the undivided forces of the Empire. And now through the Lutheran religious revolt a new foe seemed to be arising in his own household. The Protest of the Diet of Spires made it clear that the Emperor must either crush or conciliate the party who had been bold enough to question his authority, and the despatches from the East showed that his action must be prompt. Accordingly, another Diet was convened for Augsburg the following year, when it was hoped the new party might be conclusively suppressed. The Protestant chiefs foresaw the danger, convened a council,

Augsburg

and formed the Schmalkald League. The duty of preparing a statement of their faith—a manifesto of the Evangelical party—was entrusted to Melanchthon.

On June 15, 1530, Augsburg crowded its streets and windows to watch the train of the Emperor as he passed through the city to the Episcopal Palace.

The procession was headed by two companies of the picturesque landsknechts, whose types we may see in the etchings of Dürer. Then came four hundred and fifty mounted troops—the body-guard of the six Electoral Princes—with light armour and scarlet jackets, and in all the pomp and blazonry of their chiefs. The Emperor's retinue followed—pages in scarlet and yellow velvet; the German, Spanish and Bohemian nobles on horseback; dukes, princes and electors; heralds and trumpeters, and, under a splendid canopy, the Emperor himself. Then came bands of clergy in their canonicals, foreign ambassadors, and lastly, in long procession, troops of horse and foot and burghers of the City Guard. The princes afterwards accompanied the Emperor to the cathedral, and then to his apartments in the palace. Few



AUGSBURG.

civil or ecclesiastical conferences had been introduced with a more magnificent ceremonial, and the citizens may safely have inferred that matters of unusual importance were on hand. The popular interest was at its height when, ten days afterwards, in the chapel of the Episcopal Palace, Chancellor Baier read aloud for the space of two hours the statement of the Reformed Faith as prepared by Melanchthon.

The chapel was crowded to the door ; the courtyard was equally thronged, but so clear was the emphatic German of the Chancellor, and so profound was the attention, that the silent listeners outside, as well as within, could hear every word.

It made a profound impression. A statement so moderate in tone, so reasonable in argument, so full of the glow of devout feeling, so welcome in its fresh explanation of the Gospel, could not but commend itself to many hearts. 'Can you answer that?' said Duke William of Bavaria, to one of his theologians. 'From the Fathers I can refute it,' was Eck's reply ; 'but not,' he added, with unusual candour—'not from the Scriptures.' 'I see, doctor,' said the Duke, 'that the Lutherans

are in the Scriptures ; we are only near them.' So may well have felt many others, as they left the assembly with strange new thoughts stirring in their minds.

The discussion thus opened prolonged itself into the autumn. About a month after the Confession had been read, the Papal theologians issued a reply. Then followed repeated conferences, more or less ineffectual, statements and counterstatements, sederunts indefinitely renewed. While the ecclesiastical campaign was thus filling Augsburg with its alarms, Luther—on whom still lay the Papal ban—chafed himself in the enforced exile of Coburg. Philip continually corresponded with him, though it is doubtful whether all his letters came into the hands of his impetuous friend. The details of this long and anxious period belong to ecclesiastical history. In the intervals of debate Melanchthon was engaged on his *Apologia*—a defence of the Confession, and a reply to the Catholic attack. The Confession and the Apology, monumental as they are in the history of Reformation theology, are much the most valuable contribution he made to a long and vexatious controversy. They are comprehensive of the

great matters of the Gospel, set forth with much of tender and noble tone. But in ecclesiastical diplomacy Philip was not an adept. With the best intentions, he was unfortunate enough during the months of this harassing council to wound not a few of his friends, and pierce his own soul with many reproachful sorrows. Yet his mistakes were ever of that generous kind in which the kind and hopeful heart thinks that others are as frank and as honest as itself. It is one of the most depressing of discoveries to find how mistaken is the amiable calculation, and Philip had to learn the lesson more than once. At length, on September 22, the final deliverance of the Diet on the religious question was declared. The Reformed Confession was pronounced refuted, and its supporters were allowed six months to make their submission to the authority of the Church. The Protestants questioned the facts, and declined submission. The severance with Rome was complete. On September 23 the Elector of Saxony, with Melancthon and his friends, left the Diet. Luther gave them an exuberant welcome. 'Thank God, you are well out of that hell!'

Did Luther think there would be no more such places of torment? Could his much more sensitive friend share, even for a day, the same seductive opinion? Philip's heart was in his home, where his books were, and his gentle wife and children—where he could relieve his heart in wistful letters to Camerarius—where he could forget his cares for a while as he watched the harmless battles of the Iliad, or ploughed the violet sea with the candid Odysseus. His life, he would often say, was really due to literature. He would fain let the divines fight out their own passionate contests, and give himself to the task of training up another generation in the counsels of moderation, of elevating learning, of sweet and pure life. But to this reasonable haven of his desires he seemed fated never to attain. Like the far-wandering Greek, of whom he discoursed to his students, he seemed to be beaten about on every sea while he sought the Ithaca of his dreams. 'What tempests are these that drive me,' he wrote to Camerarius, 'from the quiet and more useful studies I love, into the heart of these bitter controversies which I abhor?' He abhorred their bitterness; but, after all,

was it not the will of his Divine Chief he should go? And accordingly he closed the alluring Greek pages, posted up a notice to his students, took farewell of wife and child, and with resolute heart took the road again. 'I have lived in theological conferences,' he said almost bitterly once, thinking how life was fleeting away, 'and I shall die in one of them at last.' For the next fifteen years we follow him as one follows a traveller who half wonders to find himself at home. But we are reaping the fruits of his labours in these more peaceful times, and may well spare some honour to the faithful heart which never refused to remember the voice of duty.

In the spring of 1531, another Council was held by the Evangelical chiefs and theologians, with the worthy aim of 'promoting the glory of God, the union of good Christian people, the securing of a pure faith, and a worthy Christian life,' and not, it may be hoped, without advancing somewhat in the direction of these noble objects. Those who from our quieter century look back into that in which Melancthon lived, will remember that all these conferences, peaceful or

polemical, were held in such political weather as finds a symbol in a day of spring, when the artillery of thunderstorms is heard rolling off its volleys at intervals all round the horizon, and the sky clears only to become black and ominous again. In the year of the Schmalkald League, Zwingle fell on the battlefield of Cappel. The Germans were looking to their swords, and watching each other across the table of the Diets, and, beyond the Hungarian frontier, the Turks were hammering at the door of disunited Europe. A few months after Zwingle's death, died also Philip's old college friend, Œcolampadius, asking at the last from some kind visitor whether there was any news, and whispering, with a smile, when it was replied that there was none, 'Nay, but I will tell you something new. In a very short time I shall be with Christ my Lord.' A year later came the 'Wittenberg Truce,' a further interim of mutual tolerance between the opposing parties. Further and to perilous lengths it might have gone, but the reports from the East became alarming, and the Emperor—or the Turk—adjourned the assembly. But, in spite of the continuous public engagements, this was



ZWINGLE.

one of Philip's most productive years. In 1532, he published his Commentary on the Romans; and the elaborate book may stand beside that of Luther on Galatians. During the following year, the enlarged edition of the Loci was issued. But these mark breathing-spaces only in very unrestful years. In 1536, there was an anxious and critical debate between the Lutherans and Zwinglians, and Bucer deserves liberal praise for the peaceful compromise with which it closed. Next year came the Schmalkald Conference, in which the Articles were drafted by Luther's defiant pen, and supplemented by a treatise on Papal and Episcopal power by Melanchthon. The spirit of a meeting of the Evangelical leaders at Gotha in 1540 was 'no peace with Rome,' and we begin to hear more distinctly the voices which presage war. Then came the Regensburg Diet of 1541, when hostilities would probably have broken out, but the Eastern question again became urgent, and the debate was prorogued.

At all these assemblies Melanchthon was present; but it is the noteworthy fact of the year 1534 that he was repeatedly urged to leave the Fatherland and its stormy Diets

altogether. Readers of Marlowe's *Faust* will remember that not Paris or Florence is introduced as the seat of the higher learning, but Wittenberg. The fame of Luther in a stormy way and of Melanchthon in more peaceful minds had been blown much about the world; Philip's distinguished gifts gave lustre to Wittenberg, and they would give equal or greater lustre to other places desirous of a man so eminent. He was first invited to Poland, then to his old University of Tübingen, where he would have had as colleague his old friend Camerarius. 'I believe,' he wrote, 'there is something of Divine direction in our friendship, and could we but work in peace together, I am assured it would be for the general good.' Still he could not go; his faithful Elector had claims before all others, and to something like right he was adding the inducements of friendship, and holding out hopes to Philip that he would enlarge his Wittenberg house and add a garden, in which he might perhaps find or form another 'Grove of Academe.'

But it was a more serious matter when first Francis, writing with his own royal hand from France, and then Henry VIII. of England,

invited the theologian of the Reformation to transfer himself to their shores. There was something to be said for both proposals, and many anxious interviews were held with the deputies who enforced the arguments of their masters. To France Philip might have gone, but the Elector resolutely and justly refused permission. The inducements to go to England were seriously urged ; but Philip, who had suffered acutely from his casuistical share in the matter of the bigamy of Philip of Hesse, cannot have been anxious to interfere in the more perilous matrimonial problems of Henry VIII. In the long run Melanchthon was satisfied that the Elector was both wise and friendly, and that he should remain beside Luther. In 1536, he wrote to Camerarius, 'The English business is conclusively over.'

In the meantime great events were resounding throughout Europe, and the years fleeting over in the excitement were rapidly making men older. Since the Diet of Augsburg England had revolted from Rome ; France had been humbled by the Emperor ; the Turks had sprung upon Hungary ; Loyola had founded the order of Jesuits ; in

Germany the Anabaptist Rebellion had burnt itself out in the tragedy of Münster. Ariosto had died in Italy; Erasmus at Basle; Sir Thomas More had been beheaded in England. These were great matters, but it is the smaller things, if only near enough the heart, that make themselves more acutely felt. When Philip came back from one of these Diets he found himself the object of what seemed a conspiracy of fault-finding at Wittenberg. He was discovered to be unsound in the faith; he was unworthy to be beside Luther; the Rector of the University should see to a man so dangerous.

The details of the wretched attack are unimportant, but they are part of the already gathering opposition to Philip himself and to the 'Melanchthonism' of his teaching which embitters his later years. And could it be possible that even Luther himself half sympathised with the fault-finders! Certainly he was not altogether the same as he used to be in the old cordial and generous days: was it age, or was it the work of chronic illness, or was it an altered mind? In any case, during these dark years Philip continued to suffer the pressure of a burden which seemed



LUTHER.

heavier than he could very long bear. 'For the last three years,' he confided to Camerarius, 'I have been like Prometheus on the rock, I feel as if I must sink and die.' And die he all but did, when at Weimar, in 1540, he fell ill, and sank into alarming collapse. When Luther reached the bedside of his friend he recognised the ominous *facies hippocratica*, the skin was clammy, the pulse was fluttering away. Luther roused him from the perilous coma, compelled him to eat something, cheered him in his inspiring way. 'We can't spare you yet, Philip!' he exclaimed; prayed for him in a passion of importunity. The strong tides of Luther's vitality lifted the stranded vessel; there were yet to be twenty years of voyaging to the calm waters which lay in the haven of his rest. But the strong kind man who had saved him was already within sight of harbour, and Philip would sail through the dim seas alone.

The year 1546 is one of those which is remembered, as some grim waymark is remembered, by all who have travelled over those sixteenth-century ways. It was the fateful year when the Emperor Charles V., having

1546

beaten and bargained off his French foes on the one side of the Empire and the Turks on the other, turned with hands free at last upon the Reformation party at home. He had long been waiting for the opportunity, and when it came he would not hesitate. The great religious war was out at last in the North ; and in Trent the great papal council sat deliberately down. And just before the outbreak, in that moment of fatal stillness before battle, Luther died.

The strong heroic man had been broken in health for years. He sank somewhat suddenly at the end, writing grim jests in his latest letters, and then dying nobly as he had lived.

Melanchthon was not with him. Sorrowful was the procession which, from Eisleben, where he was born, carried the body to Wittenberg again. Still more sorrowful the crowd that broke up in silence after his coffin had been left in the Nicholas Church, and the last words of Bugenhagen's sermon and Melanchthon's Latin oration had been heard. Who could well be more sorrowful than Philip himself?

The year before his death Luther had said,

‘While I live no danger may arise ; but after I am gone then go to prayer. Truly there will be need of prayer ; and our children may take to their spears, and there will be sad times in Germany.’ Surely those sad times were at last come.

CHAPTER VI.

LATER YEARS IN WITTENBERG.

THE story of the time pauses for a moment at the grave of Luther, and then hurries away to political councils and the troops gathering for war. During almost seven years we hear, more or less distant, the intermittent cannonading of siege trains, the roll of the drum, the shock and thunder of battle. Of these things, in the colour and body of their life, and in all their details, one reads in the great histories. It is possible to recall the outlines of them only as we follow the patient sensitive man who shuddered at every story of bloodshed, but stood firmly at his post, through it all, to the end.

During the autumn of 1547 the Imperial forces were being quietly concentrated, and the chiefs of the Schmalkald League—Prince Philip of Hesse and the Elector of Saxony—were preparing, not too soon, to defend themselves. And had the Protestant leaders but

been united, a good account and early in the campaign might have been given of their formidable foe. But time and the fateful opportunities of things were allowed to slip past. In a month or two the ferocious levies of Spain and a contingent from Italy had joined the Emperor's troops in the North. And then fell on astonished Germany the first incomprehensible surprise of the war. People heard, some with horror, some with unbelieving joy, that Duke Maurice of Saxony, himself a Protestant, had declared for the Catholic Emperor and accepted the police duty of coercing his own relative, the Elector Frederick. The first blood was drawn between friends. In the meantime, while the ill-omened campaign had begun in Saxony, the Emperor advanced from the South. The Elector's army, not in the best of spirits, waited for him at Mühlberg, on the Elbe. The Spaniards, with their swords between their teeth, pushed through the river, the landsknechts found a ford, and a fierce battle rolled over the dark heath of Lochau. The Elector was defeated and made prisoner; Prince Philip surrendered afterwards; and the Schmalkald League was at an end. Then

the Electorate of Saxony was conferred on Duke Maurice.

This was the sharp, decisive beginning of things, and had the control been in the hands of the Pope, who was already benevolently blessing the war against the heretics, it had gone hard with them. But the Emperor proved unexpectedly tolerant, and no one could have more fairly guarded the interests of the Protestants in his dominions than the new Elector. Wittenberg had sustained a stout siege, and then surrendered, on the condition that the Spanish troops should not be allowed entry. The old city was treated with honourable consideration ; the Reformed worship was restored, the dispersed students and professors were invited back. Magdeburg won for itself similar honour. In the meantime the Emperor convened new theological conferences, hoping in his own persistent way that the schism might yet be healed. One of these ineffectual assemblies was held at Augsburg in 1548 ; another, in the autumn of the same year, at Leipsic, when a proposed Interim was drafted. The General Council, so long contemplated, was holding its sessions at Trent, and Melanchthon had been directed

to proceed to that unpromising convocation. He had arrived at Nuremberg on his unwelcome journey, and was waiting day after day for further instructions, when all Germany was thrown into perplexed astonishment. It was the second great surprise of the war, and it was from the same quarter as the first. The Elector Maurice, irritated that his father-in-law, Philip of Hesse, had been a prisoner and wretchedly treated for five years, and inspired perhaps also by some new scheme in his tortuous policy, made a secret treaty with the King of France, ascertained that the inevitable Turk was ready with new irruptions on the eastern frontier, and then suddenly turning upon the Emperor Charles, compelled him to come to terms. The end of the strange campaign was as prompt and unexpected as its beginning. A treaty which ensured complete political equality to the Protestants was signed at Passau in 1552, and a council to arrange similar religious liberty was promised in six months. After some inevitable delay it was held in 1553 in Augsburg, where the great Confession had been presented twenty-three years before. With the Treaty of Passau and the Religious

Peace of Augsburg, the civil and the religious rights of the Protestants were permanently secured, and the history of the Reformation in Germany, as an organic movement, may be said to have come to an end.

And now surely, somewhere about the falling in of these hopeful years of toleration, must have become due at length that peaceful millennium for which Melanchthon had been waiting so long. For many weary spaces of endurance he had anticipated a golden season, when he and all scholars might pursue their useful studies undisturbed ; when the Reform might proceed unchallenged on its way of proclaiming the old gospel of goodwill and love ; when the long strife of opinion and of passion should subside at last. And though some of his friends had gone, and though he was himself fast growing old, there would yet be time enough, in life's serene evening, to forget the tempests of the earlier day, and enjoy something of the prelude to the eternal rest—the *initium quietis æternæ*. It has been said of the political campaign, that had the Protestant leaders been of one mind the war might have ended earlier ; and something of the same reflective kind may be repeated,

but with a far more sorrowful sense of regret, with reference to the war of opinion. Nothing, indeed, in Philip's wistful life is more pathetic than its wistful ending. In these latest years awaited him, not the millennium of his longings, but the heaviest of his disappointments—the most complete fulfilment of his worst fear.

The immediate cause of the sorrow which closed around him and hung on him to the end was the *Leipsic Interim* of 1548, and the share he had taken in drafting and approving that unhappy statement. The subject is still debated, and the student will take his own side. Few, indeed, will accept the articles thus reluctantly accepted by Melanchthon and his colleagues as a tolerable expression of the Reformed faith, and many regard it as a disreputable surrender. And if even now it is difficult to be dispassionate and impartial, how utterly impossible must it have been then! When the concessions of the *Interim* were known, they roused among many of the Reformed theologians the most angry protest. Bucer, whose incorruptible honesty was proved by what he suffered, rebuked Melanchthon from his exile, and his voice was but one of many others as authoritative as

his own. It was in vain to plead that the concessions referred almost entirely to matters of ceremonial and such things — those indifferent matters (*adiaphora*) which do not affect the essential faith. 'But *that*,' urged the critics, 'that is precisely the point in question ; you have dared to regard as indifferent those very matters which are not indifferent—those which include and which themselves are entirely essential and vital.'

And, however the question might be stated, the fact became every month more clear that Protestantism, and just in the hour of securing its liberties, was dangerously near schism ; and that the schism was involving the heart with its kindly affections as well as the deliberative judgment. It was deplorable, and, unhappily, it was to become a permanent state of affairs, which continued, with now more, now less depression, till Philip could deplore it no more. Nor may the narrative forget to add that the sorrowful *Adiaphoristic Controversy* was only one of not a few others almost as vexing as itself. Flacius had raised his banner of revolt over the Interim question ; why should not Osiander raise the question of the relation of Faith to Justification ; and

Staucar on the Person of Christ in relation to the work of His mediation? Why, indeed, should not a new University—a school of the sound old Lutheran divinity—be founded at Jena, by way of counteracting the dangerous Melancthonism of Wittenberg? And accordingly—for is it not the condition of all human intercourse, perhaps of all human progress?—the expostulatory pamphlets were written, the little schools of righteous dissent were founded, the conscientious upholders of liberated orthodoxy liberated their souls. These things can perhaps be estimated more fairly now; but it has taken three centuries to teach the ethics of impartial toleration, the wisdom of friendly forbearance. And is it quite certain the lesson has even yet been learned?

Could we but hear the professor himself on some of these distracting subjects once more! How anxiously would he be sure to remind us that when the Interim was drafted the sword was half out of its scabbard against his people; that his action was a plea and a concession for peace and for the lives of men! How energetically would he argue that 'indifferent' and subordinate all questions assuredly are compared with the great matters

of the love of God, the Atonement of Christ, the warrant and promise of faith—and that these foundation truths he had guarded as his own soul. Would he not win us as he recalled the conditions of all theological controversy ? how it is inevitably biassed, inevitably one-sided ; how the moderate view is sure only of reprobation by all parties of extremists ; how no Church has ever escaped the healthful discipline of dissent. Nor would Melanchthon leave unexplained the guiding principle of all his policy from the first—the effort to secure the liberty of preaching the old Gospel in all its comprehensive simplicity, the circulation of a vernacular self-explanatory Bible, *these* being the surest conditions of essentially sound Christian doctrine, and the best safeguard against all practical error.

Many such considerations might he not allege ; how many, indeed, has he alleged, and in his own admirable manner, in the old letters which still pulsate with the generous convictions of the heart from which they came ! He has added what is more pathetic than any argument—what is conclusive as to his full share of the weakness, and the honour, of our sad, imperfect humanity—he has

deplored the limitations of his own capabilities ; he has recognised his own inevitable mistakes. ' These things I did for the best. I trusted they would be taken as they were meant. I expected, indeed, too much ; but I would have died rather than betrayed the truth or wounded my kind brethren. Why have I, born for my Greek studies, for the humble pursuits of the grammarian, been set thus in the high places of theological passions and war? Would that Doctor Martin had been with us, for he would have saved it all !'

That brave voice cannot be heard again ; why should we recall from their sepulchres the frowning old ghosts which drove Philip almost to his death? The wretched Interim lived but a year or two, disowned by the Reformed, disowned even more by the Romanists, ineffectual for its purpose ; better, like many such things, to be conclusively left in some convenient limbo of failures. The troubles in which it involved him Philip bore with such patience and now fast-failing strength as he had. The faithful Camerarius saw that he was wounded deep. ' Nothing that the poets have feigned about the tortures of imaginary people in Hades can be worse

than what I am enduring ; I am so overborne with this unending worry that I cannot live.' Again the old smiling pleasantries return. 'All these months I have been fighting with these children of Polyphemus ; how should we expect broad views of things from men who, like their father, have but one eye !'

But as the years—inevitably just and kind to such men—passed gradually over, they brought many compensations—the self-contained mind, the enlarging view, the spirit ripening as it was wearying for heaven, the generous appreciation of the truly wise and good. Philip's incessant writings, now an expostulatory letter, now an explanatory tractate, now a copy of gentle verse, now an academic address, now a 'fruitful' commentary—these kept his genuine spirit clear before all who knew mild wisdom and piety, and the charm of his personal presence still touched the responsive heart. In 1551, he recast the great Confession of Augsburg, and he had the satisfaction of hearing it read in Wittenberg, in full audience of the University and of the neighbouring ministers, with universal acceptance. It is to this monumental expression of the Reformed Theology

that those should turn who vex themselves with the Leipsic Interim. The pressure of the dark hour, the strain of the divided motive, had been removed, and Melanchthon must have written with some consciousness that it was for minds which would be more liberal, and for a time in which the feverish passions of his own would not prevail. The Confession in its final form may be described in words which a German historian has applied to its earlier: 'In regarding this deliverance we seem to be standing on the borders of a limpid lake, the wild tumult of whose storm-tossed waters has subsided, and on which the sun, once more issuing from the clouds, is mirrored, though the agitated waters are not yet entirely at rest.'

One day, when called away from his household and students to attend a theological assembly, Philip explained to the young men, in a friendly little notice affixed to the classroom door, why their professor did not appear. He said with equal truth and frankness that he would much rather have remained at home—his mind abhorred contention—but there were necessary duties to be discharged, and they would understand why he must go.

The little notice may be still useful to travellers in the old paths of these times, who would know where they may find Philip when most free from care, and most ready for friendly conversation. We shall not see him at his best in the Conferences in Leipsic or Torgau or Augsburg, or somewhere else among strangers. Let us leave these frequented places and wait for him at Wittenberg. The lecture begins as a rule at seven in the morning. The little notice has been assiduously read, and if it promises an interesting course it will draw a full classroom. Indeed, these friendly messages to the students form by themselves a very interesting course of Melanchthonian reading. They are usually brief, though occasionally, as when public affairs are gloomy, they become much more detailed ; they are always instructive, always devout in tone.

When the University re-assembled after the siege of Wittenberg in 1547, Philip announced that he would preach upon the Colossians ; and while every despatch was awaited with apprehension, and the land was full of alarms, the successive sentences of that beautiful Epistle lifted, and verily not ineffectually, the

thoughts and the affections of many in the Greek class-room to those serene places of contemplation where Christ sits at the right hand of God. The next year he chose, not for the first time, the Epistle to the Romans, reminding the students in his little notice that though the book had been preached upon before it could not be read too often, just as, they would recollect, Epictetus had said that all matters of weight and gravity should be turned over and considered again and again.

A year or two later the class-book was the Argonautics of Apollonius Rhodius, and the professor took occasion, referring to the anxious state of the Church, to express the devout wish that just as in the days of the Flood the Father of men secured His Argonauts in the ark, so He would be mindful of His distressed people in the Fatherland, tossed in the perilous tempests of the time. On another occasion the placard announces Thucydides; it is a book which the Emperor greatly admires, and no doubt his young subjects will like to make acquaintance with it also. Or it is the Knights of Aristophanes, or it is the Suppliants of Euripides which, in

the attractive manner of these small placards, is explained to be specially suitable for study in the present political state of affairs. Then for a change, and for the great value of the subject-matter about which everyone should know something, the professor has chosen Theophrastus on Plants, and he will describe as many of them as is convenient and possible. Occasionally the students are told that a new edition of the book to be read has been published, and may be had from a certain bookseller, or that a treatise on some Greek subject has appeared and is well worthy of being purchased.

Those characteristic little programmes which used to be posted on the Wittenberg class-room door four hundred years ago have an interest and value quite their own. They bring back the old days: they help us to understand how the students went about their work: we can almost see the benignant face of the professor: we can fancy we hear him speaking to the young men. We are quite sure that his lectures were full of good matter—brimful of benevolent wisdom—tender with that unaffected and unconscious piety which none appreciate more than gene-

rous youth. Also, as has been said, they serve to direct us along the pleasantest path Melanchthon had found through the tangled wood of the world—the sheltered covert from which he was never willingly absent, and where, when you find him sitting in the old Greek sunshine, he is always most congenially employed, most entirely himself. To this general truth there is but one exception. Much as he loved his class-room and the Greek poets, he was still more tenderly attached to his home. To that sacred place of his deepest desire we may presently attempt to find the way.

Partly in the discharge of those welcome professorial duties, partly in the much less welcome but no less faithfully discharged duties which called him to conferences and consultations, the last fifteen years of Melanchthon's life were passed. We find the home-loving scholar, as if bearing the doom of some strange unrest, at Leipsic, at Nuremberg, at Frankfort, at Erfurt, at Dresden, at Worms. For a whole autumn and spring, the year the University was broken up by the siege, he is at Zerbst ; again, in 1552, the plague drives him with his household gods and his students

to Torgau. Sometimes his letters enable us to bear him imaginative company on the way. In January, 1552, with his devoted son-in-law, Dr. Peucer, he had gone to Nuremberg—lodging in the Aegidian Monastery with his old friend the abbot—dining with the wealthy Fuggers—spending evenings with much talk of old times with his faithful Jerome Baumgarten, to whom so many of his letters are addressed—delivering lectures before the College—occupying such leisure as was left in authorship or correspondence; sometimes, alas! wearing away the hours of sleepless and suffering nights by composing Latin verses.

On March 18 Melanchthon set out for home with two companions, his friends adding a mounted guide and two spare horses. The travellers passed through thickly wooded country to the little town of Eger in Bohemia, where Wallenstein was murdered, meeting hardly twenty people on the two days' journey—Philip varying conversation and his own thoughts by an occasional page of the Son of Sirach. The next day the party passed down the Joachimsthal, calling upon the worthy pastor John Matthesius, to whom the following day, when they reached Anna-

berg, Philip sent some verses by which he had beguiled the road. Three days later they rested at Leipsic ; thence by a few stages they came within sight of the friendly walls of Wittenberg. He might, indeed, have made much longer journeys, for once and again he was invited to England ; but Melanchthon would never leave the Fatherland, ungrateful and unappreciative as many of his countrymen were. Nor was he unmindful, these last grey years, that there was another journey waiting him, not to be indefinitely deferred, much longer than any of the others—and the last. Before that inevitable departure let us draw nearer, if we may, to the kind heart—let us join, so far as it is possible, the little home-circle, and retrace its gentle history. For there it was that Philip was ever most truly himself, and it is there, if anywhere, that it may be seen what manner of man he was.

CHAPTER VII.

PHILIP MELANCHTHON AT HOME.

IT was on November 25, 1520, that Philip Melanchthon and Katharine Krapp were married to each other. There was a distinguished company. Luther tells us that his father and mother were there: he was there himself, beaming with benignant satisfaction. No frivolous honeymoons are heard of: the conscientious bridegroom was too much absorbed in his work. On the class-room door the students read a rhythmical Latin couplet, just perceptibly reflecting their own smiles, which announced intermission of lectures for a single day. The young couple, unromantic and practical from the first, went pleasantly home, and addressed themselves to their new engagements.

Katharine soon proved herself a most affectionate wife, a devoted *hausfrau*, and, in the special matter of benevolence, a model of all the gentle virtues. She was boundlessly,

almost recklessly, charitable ; and there were only too many opportunities of being benevolent. Her husband's house was beset by an unending stream of visitors, and not a few of them came for help. There was not much to be kind upon ; but Katharine was ingenious as well as sympathetic, and if she had nothing to give, she would plead with some wealthier friend. For that matter, how could it well be otherwise ? She was but following her kind husband's example. There are a hundred stories of Philip's generosity : how he would give almost anything away, denying himself endlessly, exchanging even pieces of plate for the desirable gold pieces which he might slip into hands poorer than his own. 'I wish,' said good Dr. Peucer, many years afterwards—'I wish his friends would not put their gifts to my father-in-law into money. He is never the richer of it. It all goes straightway to someone he is anxious to make happy.'

With hearts so quick to kind impulses, with means just narrow enough to make charity a genuine virtue, with work entirely to their minds, with the soft airs of the new young years about them—were Katharine

and Philip ever happier than they were then? Who shall come back to tell us of the talks the two Reformers' excellent wives used to have with each other—Luther's Kate with Philip's—in those distant silent years? Their husbands often dined together, while from time to time the other professors would drop in. One would like to have been of the company when the party was at Dr. Justus Jonas's—when they sat out the afternoon in that charming garden of his: the gentlemen, perhaps, by themselves; the ladies, in confidential little groups, discussing matters more pleasant than politics, and more practical than Greek poetry and philosophy. Philip has himself celebrated that delightful garden in verses of suitable praise:—

'Hic gravidam pomis ficum, lentasque cupressos,
Purpureas violas, aurea mala parit.
Caetera quid referam largas natura benigne
Ruris opes horto divitiasque dedit.
Etvates colit hunc herus, invitatque frequenter:
E medio doctas huc Helicone Deas.
Hic vidi Musas pro Carmine texere sorta
Praemia victori digna Ioachime tibi.
Hic vidi laetas plausu vultuque canenti
Mycillo Aonias saepe favere Deas.
Socraticisque iocis hic Micala seria condis,
Exacuuntqui sales pectora nostra tui.'

But as the years passed, everybody became more busy at home. Soon after Philip entered on his professorial duties, and students began to pour into Wittenberg, he found that many of them were sadly unripe for the University classes, and, while there were as yet no gymnasia to receive and train them, he invited not a few to take up their abode in his own house. Gradually he found his *Schola Domestica* no unimportant part of his charge; and it was a charge in which his kind wife had her full share. Her hands were soon more than full. These lads paid, or were understood to pay, suitable fees; but who can believe that from the humble followers of the Muses fees were always either received or asked? The professor's heartiest sympathies were always with poor, if but earnest, students: he prevailed with some colleagues to follow his example; and in these domestic gymnasia he laid the University, and indeed the Fatherland, under a real obligation.

And with each successive year his visitors and his engagements increased. The messengers from many parts of Germany—from more distant countries, charged with every

kind of commission—became more and more numerous. As Philip's name and his writings became widely known, his counsel was much in request: all kinds of visitors found their way to the busy house. Some brought perplexing cases for his advice: some unfolded manuscripts of intended books: some presented credentials for academical employment: some wanted his autograph: some would be contented if they could only say when they got home again that they had seen the great professor himself. Far too sensitive to be uncourteous, far too kind to refuse any service possible to him, Philip found refuge in a manner of life which might well rival the busiest of our more complacent days.

When many excellent persons are in the mid-voyage of their dreams, at two, or perhaps at three, in the morning, it was Philip's resolute habit to enter his study. The little lamp is in his hand: he is wrapped in the long *wandrocke* of the time; whatever besides can be done for his comfort may be trusted to that faithfullest of servants—the good John Koch. Then, with that old reverent habit he brought from the child-days at

Bretten, he turns his face eastwards—his thought spreading over the dark sleeping spaces towards Palestine, and he remembers, with devout prayer, how the Sun of Righteousness arose, as the grey morning is rising, over those hills of dawn. Then he opens the Calendar and recalls the associations of the day—the names of old saints, the personages and the events of history; and these he often notes according to the year as well as after the Christian era. And then he takes up the package of letters. This one is from Dr. Spalatin, Court preacher of the Elector of Saxony, and more than likely it is on University business. This is from no less notable a correspondent than Erasmus; this is from Geneva; here is one from a Catholic prelate, and it will require careful handling. And these, placed by themselves, and first and most eagerly to be read, are from familiar friends—one from Camerarius at Bamberg; one from the excellent Jerome Baumgarten at Nuremberg; a third is from Tübingen in the old Swabian land; and the messengers who brought them are waiting for return replies. And, besides all the correspondence, there are addresses to be drafted, chapters of

new books to be outlined ; lectures, usually three or four in the day, to be turned over. The first lecture is sometimes at six in the morning—usually, seven. When the day is fairly come, and the streets of the old town have become populous and noisy, a tide of public work pours in : college councils, deputations, personal interviews ; and secluded studies are impossible. At length evening comes, with its comparative leisure and friendly supper-table : it is to this hour, sacred to the home affections and to rest, that Philip has been looking forward all the day. But like such dear intervals it passes only too quickly : the stories are told, the genial conversation has rippled on, and then the evening prayer folds together the closed pages of the day. By nine o'clock there is stillness, and the house is dark once more. But at two o'clock to-morrow morning you will see the faithful lamp in the window again.

Let us leave the busy house, and Philip and Katharine for a little : let us think seven years have passed. In the early summer of 1527, one might have seen three little people who were invisible at an earlier period. The young

gentlemen are more numerous ; the professor is more engaged than ever ; but there is a new light in the gentle mother's eyes as she tells us that this pretty little lady is Anna, now five years old ; and this is Philip, a delicate boy of three ; and this, with his bright eyes full of intelligence, is George. George is but eighteen months old : his name reminds us of the worthy armourer of Bretten ; and were it not that Anna is her father's darling, and that Philip's languid face engages his mother's sympathies, the baby would be the absorbing centre of affection. One seems to see these children again in the old garden close, in the sun-glow of that dreamy summer ; one seems to hear their young voices—to see their mother's wistful eyes. If there is a shade of care in those eyes, how much more depth, how much more completeness of content, than lay in their soft light seven years ago !

Again the years pass : it is November, 1536 ; and the imaginative mind, travelling so easily through the dim vanished spaces, allows us to visit the Wittenberg home again. Again we see Anna—and into what a sweet girlhood has she grown !—and Philip, with

some hintings of delicacy still in his face; and this small grave maiden, who had not arrived in the house seven years ago, is Magdalena. But where is little George? Do not ask his father—shrinking at the child's name—do not wake again the tender words one may still read in the old letter: '*There was nothing dearer to me than that little boy!*'

But there are pleasanter subjects. You noticed that quick young student, for nearly fifteen years one of the professor's boarders, so brilliant in his talents, so rare in his poetic gift; and you noticed also how a flush touched Anna's handsome brow as her mother spoke of George Sabinus. She will tell you how promising in every way the young man is—how natural it was Anna and he should become attached to each other—how, in fact, they are to be married in a month. And married they were, amidst general congratulations, and, as was suitable, with many offerings of Greek and Latin verse. One may see and, if he will, read these flowery old Epithalamia in the *Poetica* of George Sabinus. Anna is addressed in one of them by Aphrodite herself, and in the most com-

plimentary terms ; and if but one-half were present of the distinguished company invited—Apollo, all the Nine Muses, the Nymphs, the Hamadryads—there surely never was such a wedding ! It is a flood of sunshine, melodious with friendly voices, in the middle of that dark Wittenberg winter four hundred years ago.

Again the years pass, but with what silent, deceptive speed ! It is not seven years only, but twenty years, that have gone. And again you visit, as some unseen presence might, the familiar home. Again, with an effort, you try to recognise the young people : you wonder who these children are you have not seen before. One may imagine how the story of these years may have been told, when on some still evening, as the dying sun filled the old garden, some more intimate friend, sitting beside her, drew the tale from the tremulous lips—from the wistful memory of the professor's gentle wife.

One would learn from the narrative, not unbroken by sighs and quiet tears, that for ten years now Anna's fair eyes had been dark in her Königsberg grave : that these girls, already betrothed, are her daughters :

that she had known great and sore adversities—better left now in gentle silence: that the father had declined visibly ever since the child of his heart had died. And Magdalena had been married—these are her little girls—and to one of the best of men; no one could be kinder to his wife than Dr. Peucer—no one more devoted to her father, bearing him company on his journeys, watching his health with more than a physician's care, gathering round his later years a soft consolation for many of his sorrows. How bound up their grandfather is in all the young people—how tender the messages he sends them when he is absent—how peacefully content he is about their future! And one would notice, as she told the blended tender human history of smiles and tears, how wasted and changed the gentle lady herself too evidently was.

Let us follow the narrative but a little further. In the autumn of 1557, Melanchthon, leaving an ecclesiastical conference at Worms, had gone on business connected with the organisation of a gymnasium to the old city of Heidelberg. His faithful son-in-law, Dr. Peucer, was with him; and his brother

George, from Bretten, had unexpectedly joined the party. Again Philip saw the stately castle he had known so well in his student days—saw the University class-rooms—saw the beautiful woods of the Neckar as they flamed their bright, fading foliage away. Unexpectedly also, and as if to complete the peaceful memories of the visit to the old place, Camerarius arrived from Wittenberg. Next morning the two friends walked through the trellised garden alleys of the castle, their minds full of that unspoken thought which in later life the revisited scenes of youth have such power to awake. At length Camerarius reverted to the true, the sad reason of his arrival. Katharine had been ill; the anxious inquiries of her husband had been gently evaded; but the message which Joachim's heavy heart was carrying must be delivered: she had grown worse—she had sunk rapidly, and the dim pitying eyes told the rest. There was a moment of silence—that moment which, when in the crises of the heart it visits us, is an age—the silence which is so full of the voices of eternity. Then Philip said, '*I shall see her soon again: I shall be with her for ever.*'

With the death of his wife the more intimate history of Melanchthon's household is closed. And now there is but a little space to be passed over, and the words of love and hope shall be fulfilled.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SUNSET.

WHEN we have sailed for our appointed years over life's strange sea, and when we approach at last its more strange and mysterious shore—concealed as that ever is from us by the deep mist which never lifts nor parts—are there not intimations given to those who are nearing the end—intimations they alone can interpret ; 'tokens,' as John Bunyan has said, 'secret' to all others but to themselves alone ! To Philip Melanchthon these tokens were surely being sent, during the last years of his life, as if by trusted messengers, and he knew how full of significance they were. There is nothing more touching or gravely beautiful than to notice how everything was having the one solemn, but not at all unwelcome, meaning to him for about a year before the end. He thinks about his father's death, recalls all the tender circumstances, feels as if he were a child again, and yet, even

more, that he can now understand his father's mind, and that he is strangely moving into his place. As one after another of his faithful old friends dies—Bugenhagen, Meibomius, Burckhardt—he follows them wistfully, with many ever-repeated thoughts of the serene rest to which they have attained, and ever more and more unaffectedly wishing that he were with them. All things remind him of one solemn approaching event—the troubles of the Church, the contentions of theologians, even the pathetic presence of innocent little children. His thoughts, full of renewed tenderness, go back to his gentle wife : he misses her more and more ; he writes of her many virtues, her endless services—how good she was—how welcome the day will be that brings him to her side again. Sometimes, when peculiarly distressed by the petulant assaults upon him, he speaks of taking refuge in Palestine : he will find out the retreat of St, Jerome, and live as he lived, far from men, in study and contemplation and prayer. But this is only for a moment. The one and the unfailing refuge to which more and more seriously he is looking is the peaceful country whither so many of his friends are gone.

‘Were it not the will of God, I do indeed desire to depart and to meet my blessed Lord.’

Thus, when the year 1560 came—the year he had long anticipated, for it was his 63rd and climacteric year—he was deeply assured it would prove the last. But he intermitted no work: it is strangely touching to see how earnest he is about all work which can possibly be done. In April he went to Leipsic; the north wind swept the chill roads as he came back, and he was seized with feverish chills and ominous symptoms of grave illness. The history of this last pathetic stage of his life has been told, day by day, almost hour by hour, by Dr. Windsheim in the address delivered at Melanchthon’s funeral. As we read his reverent minute descriptions again, we seem to be spectators of the last days—members of the sorrowful affectionate company who were always with the dying man.

It is pleasant to know that Camerarius was with his friend during these last days. Dr. Peucer was always close to him with every kind service. So long as Philip, in the intermissions of his severer symptoms, could creep to the class-room he would go. About a

Book

week before the end he lectured on the sacred seventeenth of St. John, and recollected how the last words of his father, addressed to himself more than fifty years before, summed up the main parts of that solemn, beautiful prayer. He was full of kind words to the children, painstaking about anything he could give or do to the end. Two days before he died he had a little travelling-bed taken into his study, and there he laid himself wearily down. His eyes wandered along the shelves of books—those silent friends with whom he had so long taken pleasant counsel. He thought of the little bed also—said it was a travelling one: he would use it once again, and take his last and happiest journey home. Immediately before the end he employed one day such thought as he had in noting on a sheet of paper the reasons why his willing spirit should be well content to depart. There never surely was anything more full of tender, sorrowful pathos than that little sheet. On the one side he has written:—

‘Thou shalt say farewell to sin.
Thou shalt be set free from
miseries and from the spiteful
fury of theologians.’

And then, with kindling imagination, on the other side he traced the words which describe the glory to be revealed:—

‘Thou shalt come into the Eternal Light.
Thou shalt see God.
Thou shalt look into the face of the Son of God.
Thou shalt learn those secret things
too difficult to be understood here—why
we are created as we are : how in
Christ the two natures are united.’

It is an outline of the theologian’s heaven—the nobly intellectual state when the greatest subjects shall engage the mind, not to darken and vex it any more, but to be understood—to be beheld in their revealed magnificence at last.

Thus with every gentle thought in his heart, with the highest subjects of contemplation stirring his mind, he sank with quiet motion, as if moving along some still river of peace, down into the great unbroken calm. On the afternoon of April 19 he lay with scarce-stirring consciousness and failing breath. Dr. Peucer bent over him and asked whether he wished for anything. ‘Nothing except heaven : ask me no more.’ A little while afterwards, about sunset, Dr. Wind-

sheim pronounced the great words : 'Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit,' and asked him whether he heard. 'Yes,' he faintly answered ; and then, sinking into his last and sweetest sleep, Philip Melanchthon received his heart's desire.

CHAPTER IX.

MELANCHTHON'S LIBRARY.

IT has so long been our habit to think of Melanchthon as a theologian and Reformer, that it may stir a sense of strangeness and a desire for information to be reminded that he was also an undoubted bibliophile—one of the large and honourable company of those who find delight in the pursuit and the possession of books. Philip, however, was not wanting in this quality of all developed scholars. From the time that his excellent grandfather presented him with a breviary, the passion for books, growing steadily, kept its hold on him, ever ready to grow still more rapidly whenever opportunity offered, and kept in repression only by the inevitable narrowness of income, and the absorbing anxieties of his public life.

What his accumulations precisely were when he entered on his Wittenberg duties it would be difficult to say, but it is suggestive that Reuchlin, in one of his letters at that time to

the Elector of Saxony, made careful reference to the transit from Tübingen of Philip's literary possessions. They formed, it is more than likely, at least the respectable beginnings of a library. That they increased steadily and considerably as the years went on is quite certain. His letters reveal the undisguisable book-collector. He inquires after new editions, communicates bibliographical information, lends with characteristic generosity, and gladly receives loans in return. Each new year opened to Philip with a congenial appointment, for the Leipsic book-fair was held in January, and it was a delightful opportunity to inspect the folios and quartos just issued from the great publishing offices, and to add to his stores.

The chances of procuring desirable books—and to a scholar so encyclopædic in his tastes, how many must have been irresistibly desirable!—always appealed strongly to him. It was, for example, no inconsiderable inducement to accompany Luther to Worms in 1519, little as Philip loved ecclesiastical debate, that a good library was to be sold in the vicinity. Always eloquent in praise of pure and liberal learning, he transferred much

of his affection to the volumes in which it was stored, and the fine editions of such scholar-printers as Henry Stephens and Froben were to Philip something like visible embodiments of his highest aims and desires. Perhaps the most genuine expression of his love of books—it was surely the most delicate and pathetic—was given just before he died. He had been up till then finding such rest as he could in his bedroom ; but when he was aware of the mysterious symptoms which the dying instinctively understand, he ordered a little bed to be prepared in his library. He would have his books—friends as they were of his better mind—within sight and near him at the end.

The history of Melanchthon's library—such an obscure and imperfect history as it is—has a certain sorrowful romance of its own. When Melanchthon died, Dr. Peucer discharged the duties of executor, and most of the literary property would pass under his control. But in the confusions of the time Peucer was imprisoned, and when, twelve years afterwards, he was released, his wife was dead, and his property forfeited and gone. The fate of the Reformer's books can be only

conjectured ; but in the meantime they seem to have disappeared as completely as when a vessel founders some dark night at sea.

Some two hundred years afterwards, one of the bibliographers, in whom Germany has always been so rich, Professor Kloss of Frankfort-on-the-Main, formed the plan of preparing a new edition of Panzer's *Typographical Annals*. That important book deals with the printed literature of Europe from the invention of printing down to 1536. In his search throughout the Fatherland for books illustrating his period, Dr. Kloss made extensive collections, including, in several cases, complete libraries rich in fifteenth and early sixteenth century editions. The plan of re-editing Panzer was subsequently abandoned, and in one of those too common vicissitudes which overtake literary projects and possessions, Dr. Kloss's collection was, in 1835, removed to London for sale. A closer examination proved that many of the volumes contained copious *marginalia* in the Reformer's handwriting. It appeared, in fact, that in sweeping the seas for his coveted treasures, Dr. Kloss's net had brought to the surface again the wreck of Melanchthon's library.

The subject has many difficulties in detail, but the general fact cannot reasonably be doubted. Mr. Sotheby's Catalogue of 'Melanchthon Copies' certainly agrees in a remarkable way with the main directions of Philip's studies and tastes. Here is a seductive assemblage of poets—modern and fashionable most of them when these copies were annotated—Bebel and Beroaldo, Philelphus and Politian, Lacustorius and Bembo, and many more.

These recall the days in Heidelberg when Philip was deep in such alluring studies. There is a fine collection—some forty items—of Wimpfeling's, some of them perhaps mementos of the time when their excellent author visited Dr. Pallas Spangel's house, and met his young student friend there. Astronomy, which had thrown its spell over Philip almost as early as poetry, is represented by Purbach, Manilius, Sacrobosco, and other similar repertories of mysterious astrological lore.

One of the special subjects of lifelong attraction with Melanchthon was medicine, and here are presumably the very copies of Galen, one of them the Latin version of Linacre, which

he studied till he had it 'at his finger-ends,' at Tübingen, with an array of classical and Arabian authors, with the works of later physicians sufficient to form the library of an accredited practitioner.

As may be expected, theology is liberally represented; there are fathers, councils, and polemical divines—these latter were favourite authors with Philip—and especially there are notable editions of the great Sacred Classic, which he found so much more congenial than its disputatious expositors. A copy of the rare Complutensian Polyglott has in several of its volumes *marginalia*, apparently from Melanchthon's hand; the fine Latin Bible of Koburger (1477) was copiously annotated; there are copies of the little Greek Testaments of 1521; the Latin and German Psalter of 1502; and especially of the Latin Bible of Froben, issued in 1495, the identical copy, Mr. Sotheby thought, which Reuchlin gave to Philip when he was at Tübingen.

Alongside of this may be placed a breviary with illustrations, which may have been the earlier gift of John Reuter, of Pforzheim. Rhetorical and grammatical works, agreeably to Philip's studies, are, from Priscian down-

wards, largely represented ; and there is an assemblage of classics from the presses of Aldus and Junta, Froben and Stephens, over which, in the palmy days of Dibdin, collectors would have hung in rapture. Philip's partiality for Terence, as a teacher at once of good Latin and of good morals, may be remembered ; and here are copies of between thirty and forty various editions, many of them with apparently autograph notes. The editions of Cicero are even more numerous. Valerius Maximus—that repertory of biographical anecdote and apothegm, from which Philip draws so liberally in his Lectures—appears in an array of interesting editions, and has apparently been repeatedly read. When he was in Tübingen, the idea of a new Aristotle had possessed Philip's imagination ; and here is a copy of the Editio Principis of Aldus, with a subsidiary apparatus of commentators, which bears impressive testimony to the magnitude of that unfulfilled undertaking.

These interesting volumes of Dr. Kloss's collection, dispersed at the time at the stroke of the unsentimental hammer, have passed into many hands, to be treasured, let it be hoped, with worthy affection and care,

and transmitted, when the inevitable hour arrives, to other like-minded possessors. Other of these literary relics occur from time to time. A recent bookseller's catalogue offered a copy of Sophocles, which should have attracted lovers of Melanchthon, for it was the copy presented by Philip to Camerarius, and with autographs on the title-page of each of the inseparable friends. A copy of the rare Hebrew Lexicon, with the grammar of Reuchlin, from the press of Thomas Anshelm, of Pforzheim, is in the possession of J. B. Braithwaite, Esq., of London, and that venerable scholar believes it to be, in all probability, Melanchthon's copy, with many of his pen-and-ink sketches, and with notes made apparently when he was at school.

In the British Museum will be found, as may be expected, several memorials of Melanchthon of high interest—manuscript and printed; and the Libraries of the Fatherland naturally claim many more. These faded pages, on which Melanchthon's hand must have rested, along which his untiring pen has coursed, affect us strangely; they seem to bring him so near, but he remains so distant; so communicative they are, but so

silent ; they have been touched, as all similar relics are touched, with the reticence and mystery of the grave. Yet who would not visit the shrines of such oracles again ? Surely there are favourable moments ; it is but the turning of a page, the recognition of a signature ; a face seems to pass, a voice to be half heard ; is it only the whim of the imagination ? and it is but for a moment ; but we have touched a hand that is not cold, and for an instant we have been among those who are no more.

Op. Zempson
in Memoriam on
Hallam's
letter

THE END.

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